Burial in Later Anglo-Saxon England, C. 650-1100 AD

Burial in Later Anglo-Saxon England, c.650-1100 AD (Studies in Funerary Archaeology, Book 4) [Retail]

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Burial in Later Anglo-Saxon England *c.* 650–1100 AD

Jo Buckberry
and
Annia Cherryson

STUDIES IN FUNERARY ARCHAEOLOGY

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OXBOW BOOKS
Oxford and Oakville

Published by
Oxbow Books, Oxford, UK

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ISBN 978-1-84217-965-9
EPUB ISBN: XXXXXXXXXXXXX

This book is available direct from:

Oxbow Books, Oxford, UK
(Phone: 01865-241249; Fax: 01865-794449)

and

The David Brown Book Company
PO Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779, USA
(Phone: 860-945-9329; Fax: 860-945-9468)

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www.oxbowbooks.com

Cover image
Burial in a lead coffin, Staple Gardens, Winchester
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A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Burial in later Anglo-Saxon England c. 650-1100 ad / edited by Jo Buckberry and Annia Cherryson.
p. cm.
ISBN 978-1-84217-965-9
1. Funeral rites and ceremonies, Medieval--England. 2. Burial--England--History. 3. Civilization, Anglo-Saxon. 4. Human remains (Archaeology)--England. 5. Anglo-Saxons--England--Antiquities. 6. Great Britain--Civilization--To 1066 I. Buckberry, Jo. II. Cherryson, Annia.
GT3243.B87 2010
393.90942--dc22

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Short Run Press, Exeter

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Introduction

Annia Cherryson and Jo Buckberry

The last ten to fifteen years have seen major breakthroughs in the way later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are studied. These developments follow the publication of several important cemeteries (Phillips and Heywood 1995; Boddington 1996; Heighway and Bryant 1999; Rodwell 2001; Cramp 2005; Mays *et al*. 2007), but more importantly a number of synthetic works that draw together this wealth of primary archaeological data (Hadley 2000a; Hadley 2001; Blair 2005; Reynolds 2009). This book aims to bring together a range of papers that give an overview of current research on later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from a number of different perspectives. The overarching theme of the book is differential treatment in death, which is examined at the site-specific, settlement, regional and national level.

Twenty years ago, later Anglo-Saxon funerary archaeology was the poor relation to the study of earlier cemeteries, which contain a high proportion of individuals accompanied by grave or pyre goods. The seminal volume 'Anglo Saxon Cemeteries, 1979' (Rahtz *et al*. 1980) contained 25 papers. Just three of these papers considered later cemeteries. The chronological imbalance seen in the earliest studies can be attributed in part to the absence of grave goods in later Anglo-Saxon burials but perhaps even more so to the traditional view that the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to Christianity during the seventh century led to the rapid abandonment of furnished burial and ushered in an era of homogenous churchyard burial (Meaney and Hawkes 1970, 51). Christian cemeteries and the burial practices within them were viewed, at least nominally, as comparable to that of modern society (Watts and Rahtz 1985, 128), in which (Christian) burial expresses 'an ideal of equality, humility and non-materialism which is blatantly in contrast with the way we live our lives in practice' (Hodder 1980, 168). This sentiment has led to the view that later Anglo-Saxon burials were uniform and egalitarian, following the Christian ideal, despite the evident stratification in society at that time (Geake 1997, 127; Tarlow 1997, 139; Carver 1999, 8). These views meant that Christian burials were perceived as having a lower research potential and significance than earlier accompanied burials.

Recent work has questioned many of the assumptions that had underpinned the study of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries by demonstrating that the transition to churchyard burial was far from rapid or straightforward (Hadley 2000a, 199; Hadley 2000b, 160; Blair 2005, 245). Furthermore, the decline in the use of grave goods did not lead to a uniformity of burial practices but instead the expression of individuality through other aspects of the burial rite, such as the use of funerary furnishing and above-ground markers (Hadley 2000a; Buckberry 2007; Hadley 2007). It is no coincidence that the increasing interest in burials of the later Anglo-Saxon period, and indeed the dead of the medieval and post medieval period, came at time when an increasingly holistic approach is being taken to the study of mortuary behaviour. Grave goods dominated many of the early studies of early medieval burials and still remain an important aspect of any analysis, yet the last few decades has seen the scope

of enquiry widen to encompass personal and group identity, the body, the grave and the placement of the dead within the landscape (for example see Pader 1982; Stoodley 1999; Gowland 2006; Williams 2006).

Several broad themes run through the papers in this volume. The development of churchyard burial and the impact of the church on mortuary practice is key to any study of later Anglo-Saxon burial, however recent work has demonstrated that mortuary behaviour during this period was shaped by a multiplicity of factors including social structure, status and political developments, as well as religion. This variability is addressed directly by Buckberry, in her study of cemetery variation in the northern Danelaw (Chapter 1) and by Cherryson in her analysis of burial in early medieval Southampton (Chapter 4). The use of grave goods in the seventh and eighth centuries is discussed by Williams (Chapter 2), who stress the biography of objects and their role in constructing a commemorative identity, and by Stoodley (Chapter 3), who discusses the unusually well furnished weapon graves at St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, and the importance of these objects as symbols of status and identity. Many authors discuss variation in grave type; in particular, Holloway (Chapter 6) discusses the meaning of charcoal burials at a national level, whereas Guy (Chapter 5) discusses the range of variation in burial practice seen within a partially excavated cemetery at Worcester Cathedral. Several papers use a biocultural approach to cemetery analysis: Groves (Chapter 9) and Craig and Buckberry (Chapter 10) use primary osteological data to investigate health, status and identity at the Bamburgh Bowl Hole and Raunds Furnells cemetries respectively; Hadley (Chapter 8) synthesises osteological data from a number of sites to investigate the differential treatment of individuals buried both within and outside churchyards; whereas Crawford (Chapter 7) applies a biocultural approach to documentary evidence to better understand the social meaning of physical deformity. Common to many papers is the issue of independent dating evidence and the need for more extensive and rigorous radiocarbon dating programmes to fully understand the chronology of the changes seen in burial location and form throughout this period. This volume was conceived as a means of demonstrating the vitality and diversity of the research currently being undertaken on the burials of the later Anglo-Saxon period. By drawing together these papers, it demonstrates the potential for further study of the burials of this period and the importance of examining old questions and assumptions using new methods and approaches.

The editors thank all of the individual authors for their contributions to this volume, and for many engaging discussions on the subject. We also thank the many reviewers who commented on papers in this volume and Edward Faber for acting as a sounding board throughout this project. Winchester Museums Service granted permission to use the picture of the burial in the lead coffin from Staple Gardens, Winchester on the cover of this volume. Finally we thank Oxbow Books for all their assistance in the production of this volume.

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1. Cemetery Diversity in the Mid to Late Anglo-Saxon Period in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire

Jo Buckberry

It has long been assumed that, following the foundation of Minsters in the seventh and eighth centuries (Blair 1988; Blair 2005), all late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were situated next to churches and are now located under medieval churchyards (Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Biddle 1976, 69). However, over the last decade this model has been questioned, following the excavation and publication of a number of late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries not perpetuated by a later medieval churchyard (Hadley 2000; Lucy and Reynolds 2002). Moreover, the identification of increasing numbers of late Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries, isolated burials and Scandinavian burials demonstrates the diversity of burial location during this period (Reynolds 1997; Richards 2002; Cherryson 2008; Reynolds 2009). The suggestion that from the eighth century all individuals were buried in Minster-controlled cemeteries, adjacent to a church, can no longer be sustained (Hadley 2000; Blair 2005, 245). During the last decade, work has highlighted diversity in funerary provision, shattering traditional concepts of a uniform mortuary practice, both in terms of cemetery type and grave form (Hadley 2001; Blair 2005; Cherryson 2005; Buckberry 2007; Hadley 2007; Cherryson 2008, and this volume). This paper seeks to consider diversity in cemetery location in detail by discussing the wide variety of cemetery types that have now been identified for the later Anglo-Saxon period in the northern Danelaw, within the modern counties of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire: a case study

Between 1999 and 2004, a comprehensive survey of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire was undertaken by the author (Buckberry 2004) and additional sites have been added to the dataset subsequently. All local Historic Environment Records (HERs) and the National Monuments Record (NMR) were consulted, as were published excavation summaries in journals including Medieval Archaeology, Yorkshire Archaeological Journal and Lincolnshire History and Archaeology and relevant published gazetteers (Meaney 1964; Magilton 1977; Eagles 1979; Faull 1979; Loughlin and Miller 1979; Faull and Moorhouse 1981; Morris 1983; Leahy 1993; Geake 1997; Leahy 1998; Lucy 1998). The resulting dataset was compared with data on early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, to establish the extent to which later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are archaeologically less visible compared with the artefactrich cemeteries of the fifth and sixth centuries. In addition, data were collected on all ostensibly undated burials recorded in the

two counties, in an attempt to identify further later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries.

A total of 470 burial sites were identified in the survey, of which 301 were dated (with varying degrees of certainty) to the Anglo-Saxon period (see Table 1.1, below). Just over one third of the records related to undated burials (n=165). A further four sites noted as being only possibly of Anglo-Saxon date on the HER or other data source were recorded, however all of these were thought unlikely to be Anglo-Saxon following more detailed investigation. Eighty-five sites were dated to the fifth to sixth centuries (18% of all sites; 28.2% of dated sites). Only a small number of cemeteries (30; 6.4% of all sites; 10% of dated sites) were identified as being middle Anglo-Saxon in date, however 51 early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (10.9% of all sites; 16.9% of dated sites) continued to be used into the seventh century, and 29 cemeteries founded in the middle Anglo-Saxon period continued in use beyond the end of the eighth century (6.2% of all sites; 9.6% of dated sites). Just 40 cemeteries were founded in the late Anglo-Saxon period (8.5% of all sites; 13.3% of dated sites), of which 17 continued in use after the Conquest. Twenty-five sites (5.3% of all sites; 8.3% of dated sites) were recorded as merely 'Anglo-Saxon' – these were predominantly identified from antiquarian reports and were mainly dated on the basis of grave goods, therefore they are likely to be early to mid in date. Overall this shows, as expected, that far more sites are known for the early/early to middle Anglo-Saxon period, however later cemeteries are perhaps not as under-represented in the archaeological record as expected. A similar pattern has been noted in Wessex, but, in contrast in the counties of Dorset, Somerset and Devon – where grave goods were not deposited – this pattern is less obvious, indicating that where dating of cemeteries is entirely dependent on radiocarbon or stratigraphic evidence earlier sites do not predominate (Cherryson 2005). This paper will focus on those cemeteries founded in the middle Anglo-Saxon period or later, including those with tentative dating evidence (see Table 1.1, n=99), to highlight the variability in cemetery types within this apparently small group.

Period	No. sites	% of dated sites (n=301)	Number of sites with reasonable evidence for date	% of dated sites (n=301)	Number of sites with tentative evidence for date	% of dated sites (n=301)
Anglo-Saxon	25	8.3	7	2.3	18	6.0
Early Anglo-Saxon	85	28.2	59	19.6	26	8.6
Early to mid Anglo-Saxon	51	16.9	40	13.3	11	3.7
Early to mid grave goods, but no burial	41	13.6	41	13.6	-	-
Mid Anglo-Saxon	30	10.0	28	9.3	2	0.7
Mid to late Anglo-Saxon	29	9.6	20	6.6	9	3.0
Late Anglo-Saxon	23	7.7	15	5.0	8	2.7
Late Anglo-Saxon to medieval (or later)	17	5.7	16	5.3	1	0.3
Total	301	100%	226	75%	75	25%

Table 1.1: Results of a survey of Anglo-Saxon burial sites in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire

Cemeteries without churches

The mid-seventh and eighth centuries witnessed the foundation of a large number of new cemeteries. Initially, many of these contained furnished burials; the proportion of furnished to unfurnished burials within a cemetery is highly variable, but is generally lower than is the case in the early Anglo-Saxon period. Mid Anglo-Saxon cemeteries with many furnished graves are often referred to as 'final phase' cemeteries (*i.e.* the final phase of furnished burial), but broadly contemporary cemeteries containing few or no accompanied burials have also been excavated, and there is no clear dividing line in terms of the percentage of accompanied burials within a cemetery to separate 'final phase' cemeteries from cemeteries

of (largely) unaccompanied burials. It is far more useful to categorise individual burials of the conversion period as accompanied or unaccompanied, rather than try to categorise the cemeteries as being largely furnished or unfurnished (Geake 1992, 89).

Burials accompanied by conversion period grave goods are found in cemeteries founded in the fifth and sixth centuries, as well as in the newly founded cemeteries dating to the late seventh and early eighth centuries, clearly showing that a simple transition from one type of cemetery to another did not occur (Stoodley 2007). Conversion-period cemeteries were more highly organised than earlier cemeteries, with burials arranged regularly, sometimes in rows, and the bodies positioned in a more uniform manner, usually supine and extended, and often west-east aligned (throughout this paper, the first orientation will refer to the head end of the grave). For those cemeteries containing higher proportions of accompanied burials, there was a visible decrease in both the number of grave goods deposited, and also in the range and type of artefacts deposited, and many burials were accompanied by just a buckle and/or a knife (Geake 1992, 85). However, many of the artefacts were of a superior quality compared with those commonly deposited during the sixth century, and cruciform items became more common (Lethbridge 1936, 47–9; Evison 1956; Hyslop 1963, 162; Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Boddington 1990, 181; Geake 1992, 84–5). Margaret Faull suggested that 'final phase' cemeteries were located closer to settlements than the early cemeteries, whereas by the late Anglo-Saxon period churchyards were located within the settlement itself (Faull 1976). More recent surveys of cemetery and settlement evidence, however, have shown that cemeteries did not move towards settlements (which were also moving in the landscape), although there is evidence for 'paired' pagan and conversionperiod cemeteries, as seen at Sancton (Yorks.) and Sheffield's Hill (Lincs.) (Hadley 2007; Stoodley 2007). The decline in grave goods and the shift towards more organised cemeteries was traditionally attributed to the conversion process, with the Church seen as the instigator of these changes (Hyslop 1963, 192). However, there is little evidence that the Anglo-Saxon Church was especially concerned with the manner in which people were buried (Bullough 1983), and therefore it has alternatively been suggested that economic, political and social reasons explain the change in burial style (Arnold 1982; Boddington 1990; Geake 1992), with personal choice, either by the individual or the community, often playing an important role in cemetery and burial diversity.

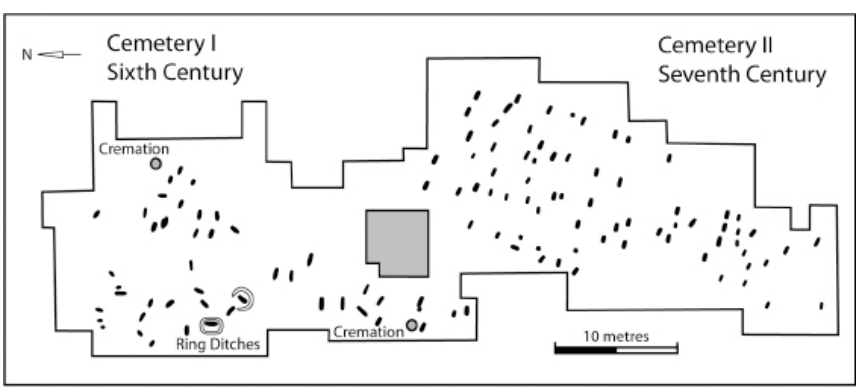

Figure 1.1: Sheffield's Hill, Roxby-cum-Risby. The sixth-century Sheffield's Hill I cemetery is 10m to the north of the seventh-century Sheffield's Hill II cemetery (drawn by Dan Bashford).

Of the 29 mid-Anglo-Saxon sites identified in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, twenty had graves containing conversion-period grave goods (Table 1.2 and Table 1.3). This includes twelve cemeteries, one barrow burial and seven isolated burials. Isolated and barrow burials are discussed in more detail below.

In Yorkshire, several cemeteries of accompanied burials were inserted into, or located around, prehistoric earthworks, including the Iron Age square barrow cemetery at Garton Station (Stead 1991, 17–24), the barrow and linear earth work at Garton Green Lane Crossing (Mortimer 1905, 247–257) and the Bronze Age barrow at Uncleby (Smith 1912), following a pattern commonly seen for early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in this region (Lucy 1998) and elsewhere (Williams 1997; Cherryson 2005). The re-use of prehistoric sites was observed less frequently in Lincolnshire, however some examples were noted, including the seventh-century cemetery at Kirkby-la-Thorpe, which overlay two prehistoric ring ditches (Bonnor and Allen 2000) and a disturbed burial inserted into a Bronze Age barrow at West Halton (Dawn Hadley, *pers. comm.*). In some cases, the seventh-century cemetery could be shown to be located a short distance away from an earlier cemetery, following the pattern first noted at Sancton (Faull 1976). For example, the seventh-century Sheffield's Hill II in Roxby-cum-Risby parish, was located just 10m to the south of the sixthcentury Sheffield's Hill I (Figure 1.1) (Leahy and Williams 2001); however in most cases this kind of relationship could not be demonstrated.

Traditional models saw the so-called 'final phase' cemeteries as a fairly short-lived and transitional phase, disappearing in the early-mid eighth century as churchyard burial became universal (Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Biddle 1976). Similarly, non-churchyard cemeteries are also often seen as a largely late seventh- to eighth-century phenomenon. These burial grounds are, in many ways, identical to churchyard cemeteries, with west-east aligned supine burials often arranged into rows, but without a church. The biggest difficulty encountered when studying non-churchyard cemeteries is establishing if they were merely partially excavated churchyards with any archaeological evidence of a church either destroyed by later activity or remaining outside the excavated area. This said, a growing number of non-churchyard cemeteries are being recognised. For example, non-churchyard cemeteries in Wessex include the long-lived seventh-century foundations at Bevis Grave, Bedhampton and SOU 862 in Southampton (both Hants), Wembdon and Templecombe (both Somerset); and the later cemeteries of Six Dials (Hants) and Staple Gardens in Winchester (Cherryson 2008). Clearly, burial persisted away from churches into the eighth century and beyond, both within existing seventh-century cemeteries and in later foundations, but to what extent were these nonchurchyard cemeteries nonetheless under ecclesiastical control? At Chimney (Oxon), the non-churchyard cemetery was located on land granted to the clergy of Bampton Minster (located three miles away) in the mid-tenth century (Crawford 1989; Blair 2005, 467). Other examples of satellite lay cemeteries have not been securely identified, but often the absence of good documentary evidence makes this kind of connection difficult to substantiate. However, monasteries sometimes had multiple cemeteries, including satellite cemeteries; for example Ailcy Hill in Ripon (Yorks) has been interpreted as a satellite cemetery of Ripon Minster, although in this case the cemetery was just 200m from the Minster (Hall and Whyman 1996).

Unfortunately, independent dating evidence is rarely obtained for middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, and this makes it difficult to assess their origins and longevity. Cemeteries with accompanied burials are assumed to date to the seventh and eighth centuries (and not continue any later) and those without any grave goods (or a church) are assumed to date to the eighth and possibly early ninth centuries. Where radiocarbon dates are obtained, only a

small number of burials are usually sampled, which makes it difficult to assess when cemeteries were founded, how long they were in use for and, crucially, when during the period of cemetery use the most burial occurred. At the Dixon Keld burial ground in Masham (Yorks), dated to AD 679–868, AD 784–983 and AD 872–1011 (all cal 2 sigma) (Buckberry *et al*. 2009) and Thornton Steward (Yorks), dated to AD 660–810, AD 680–900 and AD 810–1020 (all cal 2 sigma) (Adamson and Abramson 1997), multiple radiocarbon dates revealed that both cemeteries were in use for several centuries, and in both cases beyond the ninth century. At Riccall (Yorks), initially three radiocarbon dates were obtained, giving a date range spanning the eighth to late eleventh/early twelfth centuries, but centred on the tenth century (Buckberry 2004), showing that the cemetery was in use far later than anyone would have expected. A further six burials were radiocarbon dated prior to publication and these indicated that the cemetery was is use from the seventh until the twelfth century (Hall *et al*. 2008) – a wider range than the initial three dates indicated. Beyond issues of dating, the biggest difficulty encountered when studying non-churchyard cemeteries is establishing if they were merely partially excavated churchyards with any archaeological evidence of a church either destroyed by later activity or remaining outside the excavated area. Indeed, at Riccall, Masham and Thornton Steward it is possible that evidence for a church lay beyond the limits of the excavations.

Cemetery name(s)	Date	Dating evidence	Associated features	References
Burton Pidsea EY	Conversion period	Grave goods		Poulson 1841, 44; Geake 1997, 157
Howe Hill (Carthorpe parish) NY	Conversion period	Grave goods	Inserted into a natural mound	Lukis 1870; Geake 1997, 189
Garton Green Lane Crossing (Garton II, Garton Gate House) – first group EY	Conversion period	Grave goods	Bronze Age barrow. First of two groups of burials to the north of barrow number C34. The second group of burials was located approximately 46 feet to the east of the first group and are treated as a separate cemetery here	Mortimer 1905, 247–57; Geake 1997, 158
Garton on the Wolds (Garton Slack I, Sledmere) EY	8C	Grave goods, 8 sceattas (720–725)	Linear earthwork (the 'Double Dyke')	Mortimer 1905, 624–70; Grantham and Grantham 1965; Geake 1997, 158
Garton Station EY	Conversion period	Grave goods	Iron Age square barrow cemetery	Stead 1987; Stead 1991, 17–24; Geake 1997, 158
Painsthorpe Wold I (Kirkby Underdale parish) EY	7C	Grave goods	Bronze Age barrow	Mortimer 1905, 113–7; Geake 1997, 158
Uncleby (Kelleythorpe) (Kirkby Underdale parish) EY	7C	Grave goods	Bronze Age barrow	Greenwell 1877, 135–6; Mortimer 1905, 118; Smith 1912; Geake 1997, 159; Harrison 1997
Kirkby-la-Thorpe L	7C	Grave goods	Two prehistoric ring ditches (either Bronze Age or Iron Age)	Network Archaeology Ltd 1999; Bonnor and Allen 2000
Chapel Lane, Navenby L	Mid Anglo-Saxon	Grave goods including 7C beaker	Bronze Age and Romano-British cremations	Palmer-Brown 1996
Seamer NY	Conversion period	Grave goods		Wright 1865; Geake 1997, 190
Tetford Hill L	Conversion period	Grave goods		Wilson and Hurst 1959, 297; Petch 1960, 19–20; Geake 1997, 168
Sheffield's Hill II (Roxby-cum-Risby) L	Conversion period	Grave goods	10m to south of 6C cemetery	Leahy and Williams 2001

Table 1.2: Cemeteries with accompanied burials. Grave goods were identified as merely 'conversion-period' (following Geake 1997) unless further details are given. Counties are given in this and all subsequent tables as follows: L=Lincolnshire, EY=East Yorkshire, NY=North Yorkshire, SY=South Yorkshire, WY=West Yorkshire.

Cemetery name(s)	Date	Dating evidence	Associated features	References
Caenby L	Conversion period	Grave goods	7C barrow	Jarvis 1850; Geake 1997, 167
West Halton L	600–670 cal AD	C14	Bronze Age barrow	Dawn Hadley, *pers. comm.*
Occaney Beck (Occaney) (Walkingham Hill with Occaney parish) NY	7C	Annular brooches		Waterman 1951; Meaney 1964, 295; Geake 1997, 190
Womersley SY	7C	Pendant		Bateman 1860, 289; Meaney 1964, 303; Geake 1997, 191
Burton Fields (Stamford Bridge parish) EY	Conversion period	Grave goods		Kitson Clark 1942; Meaney 1964; Eagles 1979; Loughlin and Miller 1979; Geake 1997; Lucy 1998
Hambleton Moor (Byland with Wass parish) NY	Conversion period	Grave goods		Geake 1997, 189
White Hart Farm, North Elmsall WY	7C	Grave goods	Located 'some 10 yds from the west wall of the church'	Bellamy 1963–6, 9; Wilson and Hurst 1964, 238; Faull and Moorhouse 1981, 180; Geake 1997, 191
Dalton Parlours (Collingham parish) WY	??C	Brooch	Overlying a Roman villa	Moorhouse 1977, 8; Moorhouse 1978, 11; Webster and Cherry 1978, 150–1; Moorhouse 1979, 6; Faull and Moorhouse 1981, 180; Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990, 285–7; Geake 1997, 191
Kettlewell NY	660–780 cal AD	C14		HER records
Ash Hill long barrow (Swinhope) L	730–1149 cal AD	C14	Neolithic barrow	Phillips 1985, 72–73; Phillips 1989
Tattershall Thorpe L	7C or later	Artefacts	Overlying a Neolithic settlement	Hinton and White 1993; Geake 1997, 168
Wharram Percy NY	600–760 cal AD	C14	Associated with SFB	Milne and Richards 1992, 20, 79, 84–5; Geake 1997, 190
Blue Bridge Lane, York	Probably late Anglo-Saxon or medieval period	Circumstantial	Interpreted as outliers of the St Andrew's Fishergate cemetery	York Archaeological Trust 1994
Coppergate, York	9C	Stratigraphy	Coppergate settlement	Hall 1994, 43
Carr Farm, Arncliffe NY	Probably middle Anglo-Saxon	Reliquary box		Cale 2000
Sheep Wash Farm, Little Bytham L	Probably late Anglo-Saxon	Circumstantial		Hurley 1992

Table 1.3: Isolated burials. Unless otherwise stated, all radiocarbon dates are calibrated to 2 sigma (in this and all subsequent tables).

Cemeteries without churches have been commonly referred to as 'field cemeteries' by a number of archaeologists (for example Lucy and Reynolds 2002; Cherryson 2008). This definition is, however, somewhat problematic, as the word 'field' could imply an open rural location away from contemporary settlement. In many cases cemeteries without churches contain burials that cut through earlier occupation layers, indicating that some, at least, were contained within settlements, often being founded or falling into disuse as part of the regular reorganisation of space within villages (Hadley 2007). The extent to which non-churchyard cemeteries were present within towns is much less well established, as in most cases partial excavation has left it impossible to ascertain whether a church was actually present, although several cemeteries without churches have been excavated in Southampton (Morton 1992b; Morton 1992a; Andrews 1997, Cherryson, this volume).

The survey of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire identified nineteen cemeteries without strong evidence for a church (Table 1.4). It is notable that all of these cemeteries appear to have been founded in the middle Anglo-Saxon period, even though many were used into the late Anglo-Saxon period and occasionally after the Conquest. This probably relates to a change in practice in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when burial became more centralised. The boom in church building seen at this time (Morris 1983, 65–6; Blair 2005, 368–425) also meant that newly-founded cemeteries were likely to have a church. Several non-church cemeteries were located within a settlement, but between 70 and 250m from the parish church – indicating that burial location within the settlement was not static (Hadley 2007). Cemeteries excavated at some distance from the medieval parish church include those at Fillingham (250m, Buckberry and Hadley 2001b), Great Hale (70m, Buckberry and Hadley 2001c) (both Lincs), Thornton Steward (100m, Adamson and Abramson 1997) and Ripon Ailcy Hill (200m, Hall and Whyman 1996). This pattern could be due to various scenarios. In some cases, the location of the cemetery (and possibly a church) might have moved within a settlement at some point during the later Anglo-Saxon or medieval period. Alternatively, settlements may have contained two cemeteries during the later Anglo-Saxon period, one of which went out of use and the other continuing as the burial ground of the medieval parish church. As Dawn Hadley notes, relocation of cemeteries often took place

during the reorganisation of settlements, and was likely to be influenced by both lords and the Church (Hadley 2007, 200).

Churchyard cemeteries

The most commonly encountered type of late Anglo-Saxon cemetery is the churchyard. Indeed, such is the expectation that a church should be associated with a late Anglo-Saxon cemetery that excavators frequently speculate where the church was probably located even if archaeological evidence is absent. This begs the question; just how much archaeological evidence is needed to establish that a cemetery had a church? It is often difficult to assess the quality of evidence for the presence of a church, especially from older excavation reports and small-scale excavations. Early timber churches leave little archaeological trace beyond post holes – how many post holes are needed to indicate the presence of a church? When walls, and especially west-east aligned walls, are encountered in cemeteries they are often attributed to churches. This is problematic when only a small-scale excavation has taken place. More recent excavation reports tend to err on the side of caution – for example at Whitton (Lincs), excavated between 2001 and 2002 by Dawn Hadley, a wall and an area of more dense burial were identified within the cemetery, however the excavator clearly states that they could not establish if the wall was from a church (Hadley 2003; 2004).

The issue of the quality of evidence for churches is crucial when trying to establish if a cemetery was a churchyard or a non-church cemetery. If the cemetery and church continued to be used during the medieval period and later, successive churches are likely to have destroyed or concealed any evidence of the earliest buildings, especially if they were timber. Indeed, the building of later churches and successive grave digging can obscure much of the evidence of late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and churches. Another complication is establishing which came first, the church or the cemetery. Whereas many churches and cemeteries appear to have been founded contemporaneously, others have clear evidence that the first known church postdated burials (Hadley 2000), as church walls cut through and disturb earlier burials, indicating that churches were sometimes built within previously founded cemeteries.

Cemetery	Date	Evidence for date	Number of graves/ burials	Relationship to known church/associated features	References
North Frodingham L		Location in village (c.100m from church), on church land	'many human bones'	100m to the south of parish church	Data from HER
North Kelsey L		Saxon pottery	c.30	c.100m from parish church	Lindsey Archaeological Services 1995
Fillingham L	660–885, 895–1025 and 900–1160 cal AD	C14	1953: 1 1982: 12 2000: 6		Field 1983; Buckberry and Hadley 2001b
Normanby-le-Wold L	Mid Anglo-Saxon	Ceramics found in vicinity	Not specified		Addyman and Whitwell 1970, 96–8
Kemp Howe (Cowlam) EY	Early-mid 8C	C14	1878: 6 1967/8: 12		Mortimer 1905, 336–8; Wilson and Hurst 1969, 285
Fluxborough (southern group) L	8C	Sceat	11		Field 1989, 53; Geake *et al.* 2007
Garton Green Lane Crossing (Garton II). East group EY	Mid Anglo-Saxon	Location and coffin hinges	32	Bronze Age barrow. Second of two groups of burials to the north of barrow number C34. (see Table 1.2)	Mortimer 1905, 247–57
Great Hale L	655–765 cal AD	C14	8	70m to the east of the parish church	White 1982, 76; Youngs *et al.* 1987, 150; Buckberry and Hadley 2001c
Middle Street, Kilham EY	720–980 and 690–940 cal AD	C14	10+	Many burials and a lead coffin reported prior to 1928. Excavations revealed intercutting west-east aligned burials	Buckberry 2004, 89; Dave Evans, *pers. comm.*
York Road, Kilham EY	Late Anglo-Saxon	Circumstantial	6	Some in coffins	Eagles 1979, 219, 438; Loughlin and Miller 1979, 109; Lucy 1998, 129
Saltergate, Lincoln	660–1020 cal AD	Knife blade, late Saxon pottery. C14 of animal bone	4		Reynolds 1979; Geake 1997, 169; Jen Mann, *pers. comm.*
Riccall Landing NY	7–12C	C14: 9 dates	61		Wenham 1960, 301–7; Brinklow 1986; Hall *et al.* 2008
Ailcy Hill, Ripon NY	Phase 1: 560–660 cal AD; Phase 2: 660–810 cal AD & 680–880 cal AD; Phase 3: 780–990 cal AD & 660–860 cal AD	C14	37+		Hall and Whyman 1996
Scampton L	Believed to be late Anglo-Saxon	? stratigraphy and orientation	'upwards of 20' (11 shown on plan)	Overlying Roman villa	Illingworth 1810; Marjoram 1974, 21
Thornton Steward NY	660–810, 680–900 & 810–1020 cal AD	C14	17 inhumations and 1 cremation	100m to west of St Oswald's church	Adamson and Abramson 1997
Grantham Rd, Waddington L	7C	2 coffin nails and copper-alloy staining on one skeleton. Could be later	3 graves, 2 unexcavated grave cuts	Eleven 6C burials were found nearby in 1947	Lindsey Archaeological Services 1999
Lamel Hill/Belle Vue House, Heslington Rd, York	Mid to late Anglo-Saxon	Coffin fittings	1849: 20–30 1983: 38		Thurnam 1849; Briden 1983; Briden 1984
Dixon Keld, Masham NY	679–868, 872–1011 and 784–983 cal AD	C14	58		Anon 1989; Neale and Buckberry 2008; Buckberry *et al.* 2009
Castle Yard, York	9–11C	Under 11C rampart. Styca 840–867	2; further burials left *in situ*		Meaney 1964, 303; York Archaeological Trust 1998

Table 1.4: Cemeteries with no evidence of a church

The present study identified 27 cemeteries with good evidence of a church (see Table 1.5). At sixteen sites a church is still standing today. At six of these sites significant excavation has taken place, revealing evidence of the Anglo-Saxon church(es). For those sites where more limited excavation took place, it is generally assumed that the earliest burials must have been associated with a pre-Conquest church, however this does not necessarily mean that the cemetery was founded before or at the same time as the first church on the site. At St Peter's Holton-le-Clay, Barrow-on-Humber (both Lincs; see Figure 1.2) and Pontefract Tanners Row (Yorks), burials were cut by church foundations, showing that burials had taken place before the church was constructed. However, at other sites it was difficult to ascertain if the burials were disturbed by the earliest church, or by later rebuilding exercises. The latter was the case at St Mary's Stow (Lincs) and Holton-le-Clay, where pre-Conquest burials were cut by eleventh-century walls. Ten of the churchyards identified no longer have a standing church, but excavations revealed church foundations, including Thwing (Yorks), Pontefract Tanners Row and Barrow-on-Humber. Most of the churches went out of use in the Anglo-Saxon or medieval period, although St Mary Bishophill Senior, York, was not demolished until 1963.

A further nineteen cemeteries were identified where, although there is no primary

evidence for a church, there is an assumption that they were churchyards (Table 1.6). However the strength of the argument for the presence of a church varies greatly. Although the location of York Minster has been a subject of ongoing debate (Carver 1995; Norton 1998), there is little doubt that the burials excavated from underneath the present Minster originated from the cemetery associated with the Anglo-Saxon Minster (Phillips and Heywood 1995). In many cases, excavated cemeteries were in very close proximity to the known locations of churches that have been identified during excavation and/or watching briefs prior to construction work, or that are still extant. These burials are usually attributed to the known church, even if this church can be securely dated to no earlier than the later medieval period. For example, the burials at St Marygate in Ripon (Yorks) are located just 12m from the excavated ?eighth- to tenth-century Ladykirk (Hall and Whyman 1996, 124–30); and the Swinegate cemetery in York which is close to the suspected location of St Benet's church, first recorded in AD 1154 when the church was granted by the king to the monks of Pontefract (Pearson 1989; Pearson 1990; Wilson and Mee 1998, 60). Burials from Cornhill Square, Lincoln, are close to the suspected location of the church of St John the Evangelist, founded in the tenth century (City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit 1999), although it is likely that most, if not all, of the excavated graves were post-Conquest in date.

Cemetery	Date	Date and evidence for date	Number of graves/burials	Evidence for church	References
Addingham WY	660–1020 cal AD	C14: 4 dates	56 graves (some empty)	Standing church, 6m to east of excavated area	Adams 1996
Barrow-on-Humber L	10–12C	C14, two coins dated *c.*870 AD	Approximately 75 partial and complete skeletons	Excavated 11th to 12th-century apsidal church. Initially incorrectly identified as Æt Berrwe St Chad's monastery	Boden and Whirwell 1979; Foreman n.d.
St Peter's Barton-on-Humber L	Phase E, *c.*950–1150	C14, dendrochronology and stratigraphy	Phase E: 446 burials	Standing church. First church: three-celled, late 10C /early 11C, pre-existing cemetery	Rodwell and Rodwell 1981; 1982; Rodwell 2007
Conisborough SY	Probably pre-Conquest	Stratigraphy	1	Standing church	Miller 1804, 262
St Helen's, Cumberworth L	9–11C	Tweezers, lead plaque, pottery, stratigraphy	26	Standing medieval church. Excavated 2-celled stone church 10/11C. Earlier posthole structure may be first church	Green 1997
Hessle I (Haltemprice parish) EY		Dated as Anglo-Saxon by Meaney	1	Standing church	Meaney 1964, 291; Lucy 1998, 129
St Peter's, Holton-le-Clay L	10–12C	Stratigraphy, grave cover fragment, artefacts	14	Standing church	Sills 1982
Hickleton SY	Late Anglo-Saxon to 19C	Stratigraphy		Standing church	Stroud n.d.
Kellington NY	10–11C	Stratigraphy		Excavated churches under standing church	Mytum 1994
St Mark's, Lincoln	10–19C. Phase VIII: 9–11C	Stratigraphy, burial practices. Phase VIII C14: 9–11C	Phases VIII and IX (*c.*950–1150): 127	Excavated church	Gilmour and Stocker 1986; Steane *et al.* 2001, 252–8
St Paul-in-the-Bail, Lincoln	Late Roman/early Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval	Stratigraphy and C14 dates. 7C hanging bowl	Phase I (pre-church): 14. Phase 2 (very late Roman to middle/late Saxon): 242	Excavated churches date from the late Roman/Anglo-Saxon to Georgian period	Gilmour 1979, Jen Mann *pers. comm.*; Jones *et al.* 2003
Tanners Row Pontefract (The Booths) WY	Pre-10C	Stratigraphy. Site A sealed by 10–12C settlement	Site A: between 24 and 26 burials. Site B: 197	Excavated churches. First timber, later single-celled then double-celled stone churches	Wilmott 1986; 1987; Tony Wilmott *pers. comm.*
Ladykirk, Ripon NY	8–11C	Bone combs, sculpture	36	Excavated two-celled stone church (?12C)	Ryder 1990; Hall and Whyman 1996, 124–30
Castle Hill, Scarborough NY	8/9–11C	Church early 11C. 11C coin, artefacts	*c.*400	Excavated two-celled stone church. Possible earlier timber church	Rowntree 1931; Bell 1998, 308–11
St Giles' Avenue, Sleaford L	Late Anglo-Saxon	Stratigraphy. 10–11C grave cover found nearby	17 graves or grave cuts identified, 1 stratigraphically pre-Conquest	Excavated late Anglo-Saxon church	Trimble 1997
Stow L		Stratigraphy – burials cut by 11C wall.	At least 17	Standing church. 11C foundations may be from pre-Conquest church	Field 1984

St Lawrence, Burnham (Thornton Curtis) L	10C	Stratigraphy	Infant burial found within timber church. No other burials noted	Sequence of churches excavated	White 1978, 81–2
Wakefield Cathedral WY	9–11C	9C ring. Sealed by foundations *c.*1100	6 pre-Conquest burials	Standing church	Thorp 1975, 9; Webster and Cherry 1975, 230
Kildale NY	Anglo-Scandinavian	Grave goods	7 or 8	Standing church	See Table 1.7: Scandinavian burials
Kirkdale NY		8/9C pottery in cemetery layers. Stratigraphy. 10C cross fragments and 8/9C box shrine fragments built into church	Unspecified number of burials	Standing church	Rahtz and Watts 1997; Watts *et al.* 1997; Jemmeson 1998
St Martin's, Welton-le-Wold L	10–11C	Pottery	11	Standing church	Field 2002
Wensley NY	Anglo-Scandinavian	Scandinavian burials	1	Standing church	See Table 1.7: Scandinavian burials
St Martin's, Wharram Percy NY	*c.*950–1850	Stratigraphy, C14. Churches: Phase I: mid/late 10C Phase II: early/mid 11C	10 pre-Conquest; 167 *c.*950–*c.*1348	Standing church with excavated sequence of churches. Phase I: postholes, possible timber church Phase II: 2 celled church	Bell and Beresford 1987; Mays *et al.* 2007
St Andrew's Fishergate, York	10–12C	Stratigraphy	Total number of burials 412 Phase 4 (pre-12C): 130	Excavated sequence of churches. Wooden structure interpreted as an early church	Stroud and Kemp 1993
St Helen-on-the-Walls, York	Founded 10C	Stratigraphy	800 burials. Late Anglo-Saxon to medieval	Excavated sequence of five churches. First church single-celled, 10/11C	Dawes and Magilton 1980; Magilton 1980
St Mary Bishophill Junior, York	9–10C	Grave goods	8	Standing church	See Table 1.7: Scandinavian burials
St Mary Bishophill Senior, York	10–11C	10C strap end, stratigraphy	Unspecified	Church demolished 1963	Ramm 1965, 334; Wilson and Hurst 1965, 176; Hall 1994, 45; Richards 2000, 151

Table 1.5: Churchyards

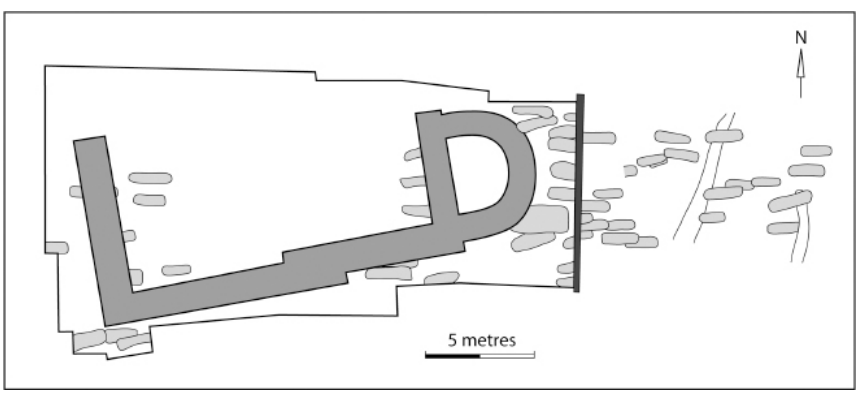

Figure 1.2: The tenth- to twelfth-century cemetery at Barrow-on-Humber, Lincs. Several burials pre-dated the eleventh to twelfth-century apsidal church (drawn by Dan Bashford).

In many cases, these possible churchyards were only partially excavated, which makes it impossible to ascertain if a church was present or not. However there is a tendency to assume that they were churchyards if we cannot prove otherwise – is this because of the (usually eighth-century or later) date of the cemeteries or the location of the cemeteries (especially if they are associated with a settlement)? In most cases it is because churchyards fit our perception of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries more than non-church cemeteries – despite the growing evidence for long-lived cemeteries that either never had a church, or only gained a church some time after their foundation. At Fillingham, the small-scale excavation made it impossible to establish if a church was present, and larger scale excavations would not provide the answer, as a large area surrounding the excavated

articulated burials had been quarried in the postmedieval period (Buckberry and Hadley 2001b). However, it would be easy to assume that a church was present: some burials dated to the tenth to twelfth centuries (although the cemetery was founded in the seventh or eighth), it was associated with settlement activity and Domesday Book refers to a church at Fillingham. But was the Domesday church associated with the excavated cemetery, or is it located under the parish church, some 250m to the east? Essentially there is no simple way of determining if cemeteries without archaeological evidence of a church, like the one at Fillingham, actually had a church, yet there is a general assumption that they did. Clearly we need to think about cemetery types with more open minds if we are to fully appreciate the variety that existed – essentially there are four kinds of cemetery excavated: those with primary evidence for a church, those with secondary evidence for a church, those that clearly did not have a church, and those where we cannot tell for certain. Date does seem to play a part here – cemeteries founded in the tenth century or later all appear to be churchyards, however there is growing evidence that church-less cemeteries founded in the middle Anglo-Saxon continued to be used beyond the tenth century without necessarily obtaining a church. This is probably connected to the introduction of consecration rites (Gittos 2002) and the increase in the rate of the foundation of proprietary churches in the tenth century.

It should also be noted that not all churches, and therefore churchyards, were the same. The differences between royal foundations, Minster churches and proprietary churches are clear from documentary sources and it is likely that these different establishments catered for different groups of society. Indeed, previous research has shown that high-status and urban churchyards contained greater variation in grave elaboration, sometimes in a higher proportion of graves, than their lower status or rural counterparts (Buckberry 2007), and often had more stone sculpture (Stocker 2000). Scandinavian burials, although frequently isolated from settlements, have also been found within churchyards, as at Repton (Derbs) and St Mary Bishophill Junior in York.

Execution cemeteries

Cemeteries containing high proportions of 'deviant' burials, including evidence for peri-mortem trauma have been interpreted as both battlefield cemeteries, for example Ocklynge Hill (Sussex), (Meaney 1964, 252) and execution cemeteries, for example Sutton Hoo (Suff), Cuddesdon (Oxon) and South Acre (Norf) (Dickinson 1974; Wymer 1996; Carver 2005). In the light of recent research by Andrew Reynolds (2009), the latter interpretation seems more plausible for most of these cemeteries, however the recently excavated mass grave at Heronbridge, Chester, appears to relate to the Battle of Chester AD 616 (Mason 2006).

Cemetery	Date	Evidence for date	Number of graves/ burials	Evidence for church	References
Former Gas House, Barrow-on-Humber L	Possibly late Anglo-Saxon	Circumstantial. No evidence the rings have been dated securely	Not specified	Initially interpreted as the lost monastery of *Æt Barruwe* (but see below)	White 1856; Webster and Cherry 1978, 255; Loughlin and Miller 1979, 184
The Island, Barrow-on-Humber L	650–810 cal AD	C14	30–40	The HER reports all the skeletons were adult males, but only two crania were analysed. This is a good contender for the lost monastery of *Æt Barruwe*	Loughlin and Miller 1979, 184; Dawn Hadley, *pers. comm.*
Crayke NY	770–1020 cal AD	C14	16 in 1956, 'further' graves in 1983	Probably St Cuthbert's monastery	Hildyard 1960; Adams 1984; Adams 1990
Flixborough (northern group) L	8–9C		5	Associated with building which may have been a church	Loveluck 1998; Geake *et al.* 2007
Cornhill Square Lincoln	Late Saxon or medieval	Circumstantial	Not specified	Cemetery, believed to be that of St John the Evangelist	City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit 1999
Pontefract Castle WY	Predates 11C castle	Stratigraphy	8	Outliers to church excavated on The Booths/Tanners Row	Youngs *et al.* 1985, 208; Abramson 1987, 198; Youngs *et al.* 1987, 172–3
Deanery Gardens, Ripon NY	*c.*600–850 AD	Stratigraphy, 7C Ripon Jewel from unstratified deposit	3	60m south of the Ladykirk site and 80m north of Ripon Cathedral. Possible outliers of these cemeteries	Ryder 1990; Hall and Whyman 1996, 130–6
St Marygate, Ripon NY	8–11C	Assumed to relate to Ladykirk	8	Outliers Ladykirk cemetery (12m to west)	Hall and Whyman 1996, 124–30
St Germanus' Chapel, Selby NY	Pre- 1265–79	Circumstantial – assumed to be St Germanus' Chapel	14	Building foundations and burials uncovered	Wright 1857, 118–9; Hodges 1893, 344–5
Winghale Priory Farm, South Kelsey L	Mid to late Anglo-Saxon	Mid Saxon pottery, late Saxon metal artefacts	Not specified	Domesday Book indicates there was a pre-Conquest religious foundation at Wingale, which was refounded by the 13th century	Wilson 1971, 14; Everson *et al.* 1991, 170–1; Kevin Leahy, *pers. comm.*
Thwing EY	8–9C	Artefacts	132	Rubble platform may have provided the foundations for a timber church	Manby 1988; Geake 1997, 159
Castle Farm, Torksey L	11C	Hoard of 11C pennies	10+	May be cemetery of lost church of All Saints	Field 1990; Palmer-Brown 1995
Kirkham Priory NY	996–1254 and 997–1268 cal AD	C14	19 graves containing 20 individuals	Interpreted as pre-monastic village churchyard	Coppack *et al.* 1995
Whitby Abbey NY	Possibly pre-Conquest burials	Stratigraphy, Anglo-Saxon inscribed grave markers	Unclear	May relate to Hild's 7C foundation	Peers and Radford 1943; Cramp 1976a; Cramp 1976b; Rahtz 1976
Whitby Abbey Headland NY	8C	Sceat, 700–740 AD	110	Probably relates to Hild's 7C foundation	English Heritage 1999; English Heritage 2000
Whitton L	560–960 cal AD	C14, coffin fittings 8–9C		Not possible to determine if there was a church, but there was probably a focal point (?church) to the west of the excavated area	Field 1988, 82; Hadley 2003; 2004
Florence Row, York	10C	Fragment of a silver arm ring	3	Believed to be contemporary to adjacent St Mary Bishophill Junior	Wenham 1963; Wenham *et al.* 1987, 75–83
York Minster	Pre 11C	Sealed by 11C cobbled surface and 11C apsidal church. Grave goods	118	No archaeological evidence of a church, however assumed to be the cemetery of St Peter's	Phillips and Heywood 1995
Swinegate, York	Very late 9C to early 11C	Dendrochronology. Areas sealed by 11C surface	100	Associated with lost church of St Benet	Pearson 1989; Pearson 1990; Bagwell and Tyers 2001

Table 1.6: Probable churchyardss.

Execution cemeteries have been defined as having several of the following characteristics: varied burial alignments; unusual burial positions; prone burials; evidence of decapitation or other trauma (for example amputation of hands or feet); evidence of tied hands; shallow and undersized graves; evidence of inter-cutting graves; multiple interments; the presence of low status dress fittings; predominantly adult male populations; association with pre-existing earthworks, especially prehistoric barrows; location close to boundaries, especially of hundreds; and proximity to routeways (Wymer 1996, 89; Reynolds 1997; Reynolds 2009).

Separate execution cemeteries were first founded in the seventh century, and continued to be used throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period (Reynolds 1997), as seen at Walkington Wold (Yorks) (Buckberry and Hadley 2007) and sometimes continued to be used as late as the twelfth century, for example at Staines (Surrey) (Hayman and Reynolds 2006). As with most late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, the dates of foundation and abandonment of execution cemeteries are often unclear, as many were discovered before the advent of radiocarbon dating. More recently, when radiocarbon dates have been obtained, this is frequently restricted to only one or two dates per site, making it impossible to get a full picture of the duration of cemetery use.

The introduction of separate execution cemeteries, often in peripheral locations, during

the seventh and eighth centuries has been linked to conversion to Christianity in the seventh century and the rise of churchyard burial from the eighth century onwards (Reynolds 1997, 37). This shift in burial location for wrongdoers does not appear to have been imposed by the Church, which showed little interest in enforcing churchyard burial, at least in the centuries immediately following the conversion (Bullough 1983, 186; Morris 1983, 50; Geake 2002, 153; Gittos 2002, 202). Indeed, the first law code referring to the exclusion of criminals from burial in consecrated ground (II Æthelstan 26) dates to the early tenth century (Wormald 1999, 307–8, 339–40; Gittos 2002, 201). Churchyards appear to have been consecrated systematically from the tenth century onwards (Gittos 2002, 208), and from this date it is legitimate to argue that the unbaptised, suicides and criminals were excluded from burial in consecrated ground. However, it appears that in practice they were buried away from churchyards and other community cemeteries at a much earlier date (Reynolds 1997, 38). Prior to the seventh century, deviant burials were usually found within community cemeteries – there are no cemeteries that contain primarily deviant burials dating to the fifth and sixth centuries (Geake 1992, 87; Reynolds 1997, 37).

Figure 1.3: Sequential multiple grave from the Walkington Wold execution cemetery. Skeleton 8 (left, radiocarbon dated to AD 900–1030) was interred generations after skeletons 11 (AD 640–775; underneath skeleton 8) and skeleton 12 (right), which disturbed an earlier burial (skeleton 13). Skeleton 11 had peri-mortem trauma consistent with decapitation, and the other individuals were buried without their crania (copyright Hull and East Riding Museum).

Execution cemeteries are a largely southern England phenomenon. The recently reassessed execution cemetery at Walkington Wold is notable as the most northern execution cemetery identified to date (Buckberry and Hadley 2007). An isolated cranium from a pit in the Anglo-Scandinavian settlement at Cottam (Yorks) may also have been from an execution victim, as the radiocarbon date for the cranium (AD 647 to 877 cal 2 sigma) suggests that it was probably of some antiquity before it was deposited in a pit that has been dated to the late ninth century. This deduction is reinforced by the presence of weathering on the cranium which indicates that it may have been displayed, possibly on a *heafod stoccan*, or 'head stake' before its deposition in the pit (Richards 1999).

At Walkington Wold, most of the burials were apparently decapitated (Figure 1.3) – although osteological evidence of decapitation could only be securely identified for six individuals, just two individuals were buried with their skulls articulated with the remainder of the body, and clearly the individual from Cottam must have been decapitated to enable the cranium to be displayed on a head stake. Hanging has been suggested as an alternative manner of dispatch in the southern counties, although decapitations are also present in most southern execution cemeteries, such as Old Dairy Cottage, Stockbridge Down and Meon Hill (all Hants) (Liddell 1933; Hill 1937; McCulloch 1990; Cherryson 2005, 234; Wessex Archaeology 2007, Winchester Museum Archive ODC89).

Isolated and other unusual burials

A small but growing number of isolated burials have been assigned to the later Anglo-Saxon period (Reynolds 2002; Cherryson 2008). These are rather varied, and can only be grouped together due to the fact that they appear to be isolated burials, rather than part of a larger cemetery. These have been found both within settlements and away from settlements, and if unaccompanied were often something of a mystery until a radiocarbon date was obtained. In addition, historical evidence gives tantalising clues to the presence of other potential isolated burials: Andrew Reynolds has drawn attention to the burials of named individuals appearing in charter bounds, and has argued that these burials are more likely to be contemporary with the bounds (and therefore date to the later Anglo-Saxon period) then record the burials of long-dead pagans (Reynolds 2002, 181). Clearly, isolated burials are not a cohesive group, and multiple meanings behind these burials should be expected.

Sixteen isolated burials (or small groups of burials) were identified in this study (Table 1.3). Nine of these dated to the mid Anglo-Saxon period, two dated to the ninth to eleventh centuries and two were probably late Anglo-Saxon in date, but could not be dated securely. Given that this is a fairly small corpus, each will be discussed here. Seven of these were accompanied by typical conversion period grave goods: a single burial accompanied by a seventh-century pendant was discovered at Womersley (Yorks) in 1860 (Bateman 1860). Two seventh-century annular brooches accompanied the Occaney Beck burial (Yorks), discovered *c*.1947 to 1949 (Waterman 1951). One accompanied burial was found at Burton Fields gravel pit, Stamford Bridge (Yorks) in 1937 (Kitson Clark 1942). The single inhumation overlying part of a Roman villa at Dalton Parlours, Collingham (Yorks), was first recorded in 1977 (Moorhouse 1977; Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990, 285–7), but it is difficult to ascertain when it was discovered; the accompanied burial from Hambleton Moor (Yorks) was found prior to 1912 (Geake 1997, 189). Finally, a seventh-century burial accompanied by a spearhead and a gilt-bronze belt fitting was found at White Hart Farm, North Elmsall (Yorks) in 1962 (Bellamy 1963–6, 9). The early dates of discovery for Womersley, Occaney Beck, Burton Fields and Hambleton Moor, in particular, make it difficult to be certain that these burials were really isolated or whether they were merely a single discovery from a larger unexcavated or unrecorded cemetery; indeed, the HER records that the White Hall Farm burial is in an extensive area of mid to late Anglo-Saxon finds (West Yorkshire HER record 4481).

Seventh-century barrow burials are comparatively rare in this region – only two seventh-century barrow burials were identified during this survey. At Caenby (Lincs), excavations in 1849 uncovered a central grave containing various elaborate grave goods including a shield with silver mounts, a sword, a bronze buckle and possible fragments of a helmet (Jarvis 1850). The grave goods have been dated to the seventh century (Geake 1997, 167). At West

Halton, a Bronze Age barrow was reused for burial in the seventh century; however the burial was heavily disturbed so it was impossible to determine if the burial was furnished or unfurnished (Dawn Hadley, *pers. comm.*). Unaccompanied seventh- and eighth-century barrow burials have been identified in Wessex (Cherryson, *pers. comm.*) and it is possible that more unfurnished middle Anglo-Saxon barrow burials would be identified in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, were radiocarbon dating to be used more frequently.

Radiocarbon dates are needed for most unaccompanied burials, if we are to understand their frequency and significance fully. An unaccompanied crouched burial, dated to AD 660–780 (cal 2 sigma), found in a pylon trench at Kettlewell (Yorks) in 1997, may have come from a larger cemetery, as a second individual, assumed to be contemporary, was identified in the baulk of a trench further along the electricity line (Cale 2004). The disturbed remains of at least two individuals were found close to the findspot of a copper-alloy reliquary box at Carr Farm, Arncliffe (Yorks). The burials were disturbed and it is impossible to determine if this discovery represents a larger cemetery (Cale 2000). Two burials, an adult female and an adolescent, the former dated to AD 885–1010 (cal 2 sigma), were found in the north-west end of Ash Hill Long Barrow, Swinhope (Lincs) (Garland 1989; Phillips and Walker 1989). In this case, the burials clearly did not come from a larger cemetery and therefore they must have been deliberately buried away from the community cemetery. It is tempting to assume that these individuals fall into the groups denied burial in consecrated ground – criminals, strangers and the unbaptised – however we cannot assume that these were the only reasons behind isolated burial in this period. Accidental deaths and illicit disposal of murder victims have been postulated for unusual isolated burials dating to the post-medieval period (Cherryson *et al*. forthcoming) and were also likely to have taken place in the Anglo-Saxon period (see Hadley, this volume).

The 'travelling tinker/smith' burial from Tattershall Thorpe (Lincs) is another convincing example of an isolated burial. This single inhumation, accompanied by metalworking tools and scrap metal, was dated to the seventh century or later (Hinton and White 1993). This individual might have been buried away from the local community cemetery because, as a 'travelling smith', he was a stranger.

The remains of a neonate, dated to AD 600–760 (cal 2 sigma) were found in the upcast of a building at Wharram Percy (Yorks) (Milne and Richards 1992, 20, 79, 84–5), and this burial is also likely to have been deliberately isolated from the community cemetery, even though it was found within a settlement. This may be a continuation of an early Anglo-Saxon practice of alternative disposal of some infant remains, for example the burial of infants within the settlement at West Heslerton (Yorks) (Powlesland 1997; Buckberry 2000). Indeed, two infant burials probably dating to the eighth or ninth century have been found in rubbish pits in Hamwic (Morton 1992b; Andrews 1997, Cherryson, this volume).

Only two examples of isolated burials securely dated to the ninth century and later were identified – two individuals from Ash Hill long barrow (radiocarbon dated, see above) and two or possibly three individuals found during the excavation of the Anglo-Scandinavian settlement at Coppergate, York. Two of the Coppergate skeletons were largely articulated and were in pits dated stratigraphically to the ninth century (Figure 1.4). A third ninth-century pit contained a disarticulated skeleton; however it is unclear if this individual and other disarticulated skeletal material excavated in the vicinity were also Anglo-Scandinavian in date, or rather were redeposited from the small Roman cemetery also excavated at Coppergate (Richard Hall, *pers. comm.*). The deposition of the remains within the settlement, at a time when York was well endowed with churchyard cemeteries, is striking. Clearly they do not derive from a previously unknown churchyard or nonchurch

cemetery, as so few individuals were recovered from an area that was extensively excavated to a high standard. Deposition in pits rather than graves is also unusual for this period. Given that these burials were found within the Anglo-Scandinavian settlement, it is tempting to deduce that they were Scandinavians, although there is no evidence to support this. They may have been clandestine burials; however this would seem unlikely within a busy settlement. The burial of these individuals was evidently a deliberate act, decided upon by an individual or a group of people, indicating that the location of burial was chosen rather than necessarily being dictated by the Church or state.

Given that most of the middle Anglo-Saxon isolated burials have been dated using grave goods, it is likely that most late Anglo-Saxon isolated burials would remain undated unless radiocarbon dates were obtained. Indeed, the final two isolated burials identified in the survey were assumed by the excavators to be late Anglo-Saxon based on fairly circumstantial evidence. Two west-east aligned burials recoded during an evaluation in Blue Bridge Lane, York were assumed to be outliers of the St Andrew's Fishergate cemetery and therefore are probably late Anglo-Saxon or medieval in date (York Archaeological Trust 1994). A pair of inhumations, an adult aligned west-east, and a child aligned east-west, were found in a pipe trench at Sheep Wash Farm, Castle Bytham (Lincs). These were assumed to be late Anglo-Saxon by the excavator (Hurley 1992), however no evidence was given to support this date. Ideally, both of these sites should be radiocarbon dated, although it is unclear if the skeletal remains were retained.

Figure 1.4: Ninth-century burial from the Coppergate excavation in York. The right femur and os coxae have been disturbed post-mortem, however the position of the upper limbs indicate an unceremonial burial (copyright York Archaeological Trust).

Overall this is quite a mixed bag of certainly and potentially isolated burials. The larger number of middle Anglo-Saxon isolated burials is probably due to the presence of artefacts that could be used to date them. However, many isolated skeletons without grave goods remain undated, and it remains possible that many more later Anglo-Saxon isolated burials may be included within the large corpus of undated burials recorded in HERs. It is also notable that many of the examples of isolated burials reported here might have been from a larger cemetery, as only very small-scale excavation was undertaken. The most convincing examples of isolated burial – Tattershall Thorpe, Wharram Percy, Coppergate and Ash Hill Long Barrow – were all uncovered during larger scale excavations, which have allowed

better insight into their context and stratigraphy.

Scandinavian burials

Despite the historical and archaeological evidence of the extent of Scandinavian settlement in eastern England, very few ninth- and tenth-century graves have been confidently identified as those of Scandinavians (Halsall 2000, 259; Richards 2000, 142). The clearest evidence of Scandinavian burial in the Danelaw is from Heath Wood, Ingleby (Derbs), where a cemetery of 59 barrows containing cremation burials and animal offerings has been excavated (Richards *et al*. 1995; Richards 2004). The use of an intrusive burial rite (cremation) and the presence of two broken swords, a ring headed pin and some wire embroidery, similar to items found in graves at Birka in Sweden, identified this as a Viking cemetery (Richards *et al*. 1995; Richards 2000; Richards 2004).

In Yorkshire, seven sites with good evidence for Scandinavian burial have been identified (Table 1.7). Three apparently isolated barrow burials containing Scandinavian artefacts such as tortoise brooches and swords rings, identified as the graves of Scandinavians, have been found around Northallerton (Yorks). At Camphill (also known as Bedale) in Carthorpe parish, a burial in a natural mound accompanied by a sword and a spear has been identified as a possible Scandinavian. A pair of tenth-century tortoise brooches has also been found at Bedale (this time in Northallerton parish), which may have come from a second Scandinavian burial in the area (Bjørn and Shetelig 1940, 77, 105–6). In addition, a pair of tortoise brooches from Romanby (close to Northallerton) were reported by Bjørn and Shetelig (Bjørn and Shetelig 1940, 15, 19). More recently, a Scandinavian burial was excavated at Adwickle-Street (Yorks). Isotopic analysis showed that the woman, buried with Scandinavian artefacts, including a non-matching pair of tortoise brooches, probably grew up in Norway (Speed and Walton Rogers 2004). The use of burial practices that were uncommon in England but typical of Scandinavia at this time (*i.e*. barrow burial with grave goods) strongly identifies such burials to be those of migrants, something confirmed in the recent analysis of the Adwick-le-Street burial. However, the handful of examples excavated to date cannot account for the numbers of immigrants that appear to have settled in the Danelaw (Halsall 2000; Richards 2002).

Many other supposed Scandinavian burials are rather less distinctive. These burials, both isolated and in churchyards, generally contain grave goods, which has been taken as evidence that these were the burials of pagans (and hence Scandinavian) at a time when accompanied burial had largely ceased (Halsall 2000, 263). However, as the deposition of items in graves continued into the late Anglo-Saxon period, the presence of grave goods (particularly those of Anglo-Saxon manufacture) does not necessarily indicate that the deceased was of Scandinavian origin (Halsall 2000, 262–8). It appears that many individuals of Scandinavian descent were buried in the established cemeteries in Christian-style graves (Halsall 2000, 270; Richards 2000, 151), suggesting a quick integration into some aspects of local traditions. A small number of Scandinavian burials within churchyards *were* accompanied by Scandinavian grave goods, for example those buried at Repton (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992), however it is likely that many more were buried in a manner indistinguishable from the burial rites of local inhabitants.

Three cases of churchyard burials accompanied with Scandinavian artefacts have been excavated in Yorkshire. A single burial accompanied by a sword, spearhead, sickle and a knife found in Wensley churchyard in 1915 has been interpreted as that of a Scandinavian, despite the fact the sword is probably of Anglo-Saxon manufacture (Richards 2000, 150).

Seven or eight burials found under the church at Kildale in the nineteenth century were west-east aligned but were accompanied by grave goods including three swords, several daggers, an axe, a set of scales and spurs (Atkinson 1868). Sadly these artefacts were stolen, however an illustration of the grave goods has been used to suggest that they were, indeed, of Scandinavian character (Richards 2000, 150). Two burials from a group of eight excavated at St Mary Bishophill Junior, York, have also been identified as Scandinavians on the basis of grave goods. The first burial was accompanied by a silver penannular arm-ring and the second burial was accompanied by a tenth-century silver penny, an iron knife, a whetstone and a copper-alloy buckle (Wenham *et al*. 1987, 75–83). There is no evidence for furnished Scandinavian burial in Lincolnshire, although there are many Scandinavian-style stone monuments, which probably marked graves (Everson and Stocker 1999). The extent to which these sculptures marked the graves of Scandinavian immigrants or indigenous individuals adopting a new Anglo-Scandinavian fashion is difficult to ascertain (Stocker 2000, 180), and remains outside the scope of this paper.

The presence of Scandinavian artefacts within later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, or the use of Scandinavian-style stone sculpture probably represents a Scandinavian presence within the local population, and both targeted and random isotopic analysis of individuals both within these cemeteries and in contemporary cemeteries nearby may help to identify more first generation Scandinavian immigrants. To date this method has been applied sparingly, with limited success, (but see Macpherson 2005, and Groves, this volume) however it probably offers the best opportunity to identify Scandinavian (and other) settlers in the British Isles.

Cemetery name(s)	Date	Dating evidence	Church-yard?	Why Scandinavian?	Grave goods	References
Adwick-le-Street SY	Late 9C	Brooches	N	Grave goods, isotope evidence	Tortoise brooches, bowl, knife, latch-lifter	Speed and Walton Rogers 2004
Camphill (Bedale) Carthorpe parish NY	Anglo-Scandinavian	Grave goods	N	Grave goods	Sword and spear	Richards 2000, 145
Bedale (Northallerton parish) NY	10C	Grave goods	N	Grave goods	Tortoise brooches	Bjorn and Shetelig 1940, 77, 105–6; Richards 2000, 151
Romanby (Northallerton parish) NY	10C	Grave goods	N	Grave goods	Tortoise brooches	Bjorn and Shetelig 1940, 15, 19
Wensley NY	Anglo-Scandinavian	Grave goods	Y	Grave goods	Iron sword, spearhead, sickle and knife. Sword was of Anglo-Saxon manufacture	Richards 2000, 150
St Mary Bishophill Junior, York	9–10C	Grave goods including 10C penny	Y	Grave goods	Arm-ring, silver penny, iron knife, whetstone and copper-alloy buckle	Wenham *et al*. 1987, 75–83
Kildale NY	Anglo-Scandinavian	Grave goods	Y	Grave goods stolen, but illustration indicates Scandinavian in character	3 swords, 3 or 4 daggers, axe, tweezers, scales, spurs, whetstone, buckles, and iron knife	Atkinson 1868; Richards 2000, 150

Table 1.7: Scandinavian burials

Several individuals from the non-church cemetery at Riccall have been subjected to isotope analysis. Initially believed to be the defeated Scandinavian army from the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 (Wenham 1960; Hall 2002), recent analysis has revealed that the cemetery contained a lay population with little evidence of peri-mortem trauma and that the cemetery was long-lived (see above and Table 1.4) (Hall *et al*. 2008). Although initial oxygen isotope analysis had suggested that some individuals buried at Riccall were from western Norway or areas around the Baltic (Hall 2002), further analysis showed that the individuals buried at Riccall were probably local to the area (Hall *et al*. 2008). A small Anglo-Scandinavian nonchurchyard cemetery at Dixon Keld, Masham was excavated in 1988–9. The cemetery is located *c*.10 miles away from the cluster of Scandinavian barrow burials around Northallerton. A current project, coordinated by Harrogate Museums and Arts and funded by Harrogate Borough Council, has enabled analysis of the skeletal population (Neale and Buckberry 2008). Further work includes strontium and oxygen

isotope analyses to determine if first generation Scandinavian migrants were present in the population; however these analyses have not yet been completed.

Overall, it is notable that all of the potential Scandinavian burials identified in this survey were located in Yorkshire, the heart of the Danelaw. Clearly many Scandinavians must have been buried in their administrative centre, York, however very few can be identified archaeologically. Historical evidence is also lacking – of the 14 burials recorded for York, just three were of Scandinavians – King Swein (d. 1014), Earl Siward (d. 1055) and Earl Tostig (d. 1066) (Buckberry 2007, 119) – none of whom were among the first wave of Scandinavian settlers in the late ninth century.

Undated Burials

As stated at the beginning of this paper, data were also collected about undated burials in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, with a total of 165 burial sites recorded, although presumably many more burials have gone unrecorded. Overall it was difficult to see any strong patterns within the undated burials data, mostly because the vast majority were reports dating from the 1940s and earlier, noting the presence of human bone during construction or landscaping, but providing little or no contextual information. However, careful consideration of the data gathered about later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the area has allowed the identification among this group of a small number of sites, which may well date to the later Anglo-Saxon period, each of which will be discussed below.

The following criteria could be used to propose a later Anglo-Saxon date for burials without clear dating evidence and in the absence of radiocarbon dates. It should be noted that few of these characteristics offer conclusive dating evidence, and it is the combination of these criteria that help to narrow down the date of cemeteries.

The criteria identified are as follows (with caveats expressed in brackets):

- Burials are typically (but not always) supine and extended.
- Burials tend to be west-east aligned.
- Cemeteries tend to be planned, with burials arranged in rows and care taken to avoid inter-cutting (in cemeteries that were not in use for several generations).
- Carved grave markers, grave covers, crosses *etc*. may be present or have been found locally.
- Occasional artefacts, in particular finger rings, knives and buckles, may be present in burials post-dating the eighth century.
- Charcoal burials, stones arrangements around the head or feet (sometimes referred to as ‘pillow stones’, ‘ear muffs’, or ‘head cists’) and the deposition of white quartz pebbles all strongly suggest a late Anglo-Saxon date (although these practices may have continued into the twelfth century). These grave variations are more common in, but are not confined to, urban cemeteries.
- Evidence of coffins, and coffin brackets in particular, is common in cemeteries from the seventh century onwards.
- Stone lined graves (or cists) are also common in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (however these are also present in late Roman and later Medieval cemeteries).
- Late Anglo-Saxon pottery or artefacts may be found in close proximity to the cemetery.
- Many cemeteries are located within 50 to 250m of a known Anglo-Saxon or medieval church. This is particularly true for rural cemeteries.

Many cemeteries are difficult to identify as later Anglo-Saxon, due to the similarities in the form of burial that exist between these and later medieval, early modern and late Roman cemeteries. However, evidence of coffin fittings, in particular coffin brackets, as found at Ripon Ailcy Hill and Whitton, and 'pillow stones' strongly indicate a later Anglo-Saxon date for such a cemetery, although twelfth-century 'pillow stones' were reported at St Mary's, Stow (Field 1984). The presence of stone-lined graves could also be used as an indicator of later Anglo-Saxon date, however stone-lined graves were also used during the Roman and later medieval periods. It should, however, be noted that cemeteries that conform to several of the above characteristics, and especially those that are located between 50 and 250m from a medieval church, have been consistently found to be of mid to late Anglo-Saxon date. Indeed, a series of nine cemeteries, selected by the present author and Dawn Hadley, which conformed to the criteria outlined above to varying degrees, were selected for radiocarbon dating. Of these, seven were shown to be later Anglo-Saxon in date: Fillingham (Buckberry and Hadley 2001b), Great Hale (Buckberry and Hadley 2001c), Whitton (Hadley 2003), and Kilham (Yorks) (Buckberry 2004, 89) all conformed to several criteria, whereas The Island, Barrow (Lincs) (Hadley *pers. comm.*) and Riccall (Buckberry 2004, 91; Hall *et al*. 2008) fit the criteria less well but were still shown to date to the later Anglo-Saxon period. Walkington Wold did not fit the criteria given here for community cemeteries, but rather had many features consistent with an Anglo-Saxon execution cemetery (Buckberry and Hadley 2007), as discussed above. On this basis it was included in the radiocarbon dating programme, and was shown to date to the seventh to eleventh centuries.

Two further cemeteries, which met only a small number of the criteria listed above, were also radiocarbon dated; however these did not date to the Anglo-Saxon period. A single westeast aligned supine burial with a coffin bracket from Green Lane, Belton (Lincs) was dated to the late fourteenth to early fifteenth century (Buckberry and Hadley 2001a). The burials from Wold Newton were disturbed burials and recovered during construction work in the village. Little contextual information could be gleaned from the builders; however they were described as west-east aligned and supine with lower limbs slightly flexed. Two samples were dated to 1783 ± 33 and 3330 ± 120 BP – prehistoric and Roman to early Anglo-Saxon respectively (Buckberry 2004). Unfortunately the two samples were later found to have been contaminated during the ultra filtration process, giving rise to a slightly older dates being estimated and therefore the radiocarbon dates were withdrawn. The dates provided were estimated to be incorrect by 300 years and 50 years, but as this contamination led to the production of dates that were probably more recent, neither of the samples date to the later Anglo-Saxon period.

It is hoped that the criteria given here above can be used in the future to identify further later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Indeed, there were several 'undated' burial sites identified in the present survey which fit them well. Probably the best example is North Kelsey (Lincs), where approximately thirty burials were excavated prior to construction work. The burials were west-east aligned and were arranged in rows. One of the graves contained nails and a second contained wood fragments, indicating that some of the burials were coffined. Inter-cutting burials revealed that at least three phases of burial activity were present, suggesting a long period of cemetery use. A robbed west-east aligned mortared wall had burials on either side and post-dated the cemetery, however two sherds of Saxon pottery were found in the backfill of this wall trench. The excavators interpreted these as later medieval, possibly connected with the parish church, which lies 100m to the southeast (Lindsey Archaeological Services 1995). Given the location of this cemetery, 100m from the parish church, the

character of the burials and the presence of both Anglo-Saxon pottery and evidence of coffins, it seems likely that these burials were late Anglo-Saxon in date. The robbed wall may have been from an early church, although this is purely speculation. Unfortunately all of the human remains from the site were reburied, so it is not possible to obtain a radiocarbon date for the cemetery.

Conclusions

Overall this study has demonstrated that variety in burial location was characteristic of the later Anglo-Saxon period. While the evidence for non-churchyard burial has been growing, and is becoming widely accepted, the full extent of this phenomenon is only just beginning to be understood. The evidence for Lincolnshire and Yorkshire has shown that, although 27 cemeteries had good evidence for a church and a further 19 cemeteries may well have had a church; at 14 sites it was impossible to be certain. It is perhaps significant that all of these 14 cemeteries were founded in the middle Anglo-Saxon period. It should also be noted that it is also possible that several of the 19 cemeteries that may have had a church actually did not; indeed in many cases these cemeteries have been assumed to be churchyards with little hard evidence to support that deduction. It is also apparent that many of the non-churchyard cemeteries, including execution cemeteries, were used throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. The longevity of non-churchyard cemeteries is an issue that needs to be addressed more fully, an aim that can only be achieved via more extensive radiocarbon dating programmes. Evidence for the late foundation of a non-churchyard cemetery is much rarer, however satellite cemeteries attached to local churches (which archaeologically are identical to non-churchyard cemeteries) could be founded quite late – for example the mid-tenth to mid-eleventh-century cemetery at Chimney, located on land granted to Bampton Minster, was founded in the 950s (Crawford 1989; Blair 2005).

The huge variation in cemetery types and burial forms throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period is now gaining wider acceptance (Hadley 2007, 194); however the reasons for this variety are little understood. Undoubtedly, the Church had a huge impact on burial location throughout this period, from the conversion and the foundation of Minster churches in the seventh century to the explosion in proprietary churches and more widespread use of churchyards by the tenth century. But it is also evident that some people, and not just those who were interred in so-called execution cemeteries, continued to be buried away from churches into the tenth century and beyond – although to what extent this was taking place outside the parochial system by this time is unclear. The nobility no doubt also played a role, by choosing to be buried in high-status locations within important churches or in 'princely' barrows in the seventh century, to founding their own churches in later centuries, to reorganising settlements, landscapes and funerary landscapes throughout the period. It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the common people were able to influence the manner of their burial, but it is likely that there was far more choice available than we have previously realised.

Acknowledgements

There are many individuals and organisations who assisted in this research. First I thank all of the SMR, HER and NMR officers for assisting with very unwieldy search questions, followed by endless chasing up of small details within their archives. Without their knowledge and assistance this research would have failed at the first hurdle. Many museum

curators, archivists and archaeologists graciously provided information, site plans and draft reports, for which I am very grateful. Particular thanks are extended to Kevin Leahy, Richard Hall, Chris Loveluck, Andrew Reynolds, Dave Evans, Ian Roberts, Jen Mann, Warwick Rodwell and Caroline Atkins for enlightening discussions about various excavations. I thank Hull and East Riding Museum, Humber Archaeology Partnership, York Archaeological Trust, York Museum and The Collection Lincoln for allowing me to sample skeletons for radiocarbon dating. Dawn Hadley, Julian Richards and Annia Cherryson kindly commented on earlier drafts of this paper, their criticisms and suggestions were gratefully received; however any errors and omissions are mine.

This research was funded by a White Rose Studentship awarded by the Universities of Sheffield, Leeds and York. Radiocarbon dates were funded by NERC.

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2. Engendered Bodies and Objects of Memory in Final Phase Graves

Howard Williams

Introduction

The grave goods within conversion-period or Final Phase burial rites of the seventh and early eighth centuries AD have received varying explanations by archaeologists. Common interpretative themes include religious conversion, kingdom formation and new ideologies connected to both of these processes. This paper presents a distinct but related perspective on the wealthy female assemblages found in some Final Phase graves. Instead of regarding them as indicative of broad social and religious changes *per se*, the paper interprets the burial of grave goods as a strategy to constitute the social memories of an idealised aristocratic female personhood. Focusing on five female-gendered wealthy grave assemblages from two burial plots excavated at Harford Farm, Norfolk, the paper highlights the biographical qualities of certain artefacts. Meanwhile other artefacts are related to the engendering of the female aristocratic body including its management, adornment and magical protection. Further artefacts are connected to key feminine bodily practices associated with household activities and ritual practices.

The paper argues that artefact deposition was made effective both through public display and staged concealment and consignment in the grave. This has two implications for early medieval archaeology. First, artefacts were operating as mnemonic devices instrumental in the mortuary commemoration of a new conception of female-gendered aristocratic personhood in the seventh century. Second, female-gendered grave assemblages incorporated 'objects of memory'. Indeed, the long biographies of these objects hint at the increasing use of portable artefacts to commemorate the dead through their exchange among the living rather than their burial with the dead. The Final Phase is therefore not so much evidence of changing afterlife beliefs as evolving strategies of commemoration and a shift in the balance from mnemonic consignment to curation.

The Interpretation of Final Phase Grave Goods

The slow adoption of shrouds instead of clothed burial might to some extent account for the quantitative decline in grave goods in the Final Phase (see below). Yet the frequent practice of clothing and adorning the cadaver continued in the Final Phase and incorporated a qualitative shift. There is evidence for dress accessories including buckles, knives and (usually for select adult females) jewellery (see Geake 1997). Tools such as shears are sometimes found, as are female-gendered items such as combs, toilet sets and a range of objects loosely defined as 'amulets' suspended around the neck or at the waist (Meaney

1981; *e.g*. see Boyle *et al*. 1998).

When wealthy graves do occur, there is an exentuated differentiation from other graves (*e.g*. Boddington 1990, 184–7; Shephard 1979). Grave-gifts can be placed around the cadaver including the continuation of the weapon burial rite for select adult males, albeit at a reduced frequency (Härke 1992). Moreover, containers were sometimes placed in graves including buckets, drinking vessels, boxes and caskets. The Final Phase therefore encapsulated the adoption of new styles of costume and new forms of artefact previously unknown in the pagan period including examples with Christian iconography (Boddington 1990, 181, 183–7; Geake 1997). Moreover, it is increasingly clear that some items deposited in Final Phase graves had long 'life-histories', being old when interred, including jewellery and bronze hanging bowls (Geake 1999). Artefacts were clearly an important medium for expressing the identity of the deceased as perceived by mourners as they had been in the fifth and sixth centuries.

The most traditional approach has been to consider the nature of artefacts in graves as an indication of religious change, namely conversion to Christianity. From this perspective, the Final Phase was a waivering shift towards Christian religious and afterlife beliefs, the first influence of the clergy on overt pagan mortuary display or simply the influence of Christian and Continental fashions. Final Phase burials simultaneously illustrate both the tenacity of pagan Germanic religious propensities while simultaneously showing the adoption of Romanising styles of artefacts with some evidence of 'Celtic' influence (Leeds 1936, 113–4). Christian symbols and iconography on the objects have been used to illustrate the process of religious conversion (*e.g*. Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Meaney 1981). Central to this religious interpretation is the idea that the Final Phase burial rites indicate some form of 'syncretism' or 'transition' between pagan practice in the later fifth and sixth centuries AD and Christian practice from the eighth century onwards (*e.g*. Boddington 1990, 178; Hadley 2000; Hoggett 2007; Pluskowski and Patrick 2003, 35). This view is sustained by the lack of a geographical contiguity between Final Phase furnished graves and early church sites (Geake 2002; Geake 2003, 261; but see Loveluck 1996).

A religious interpretation was popular within a culturehistoric framework for Anglo-Saxon archaeology and continues to be favoured by some authors, although few now accept a simple correlation between furnished graves and religious belief. The religious status of Final Phase burials is therefore generally seen as 'ambiguous' (Meaney 2003, 240–1). Hence, studies have looked beyond religion for other explanations. These include increased socio-economic differentiation and changing socio-political structures associated with kingdom formation. Social explanations for the shift in burial practices and the provision of grave goods are seen in terms of changing patterns in the social structuring of age (Crawford 1993; 2000), gender (Stoodley 1999), status (Arnold 1997; Shephard 1979), kinship structures and ethnicity (Boddington 1990; Härke 1992; Sayer 2009) as well as territoriality and regionality (Loveluck 1996; Lucy 1998; Semple 2003; Stoodley 2007). Socio-economic and socio-political changes in this period included patterns of taxation (Carver 1989), changes in law, inheritance patterns and concepts of land tenure (Shephard 1979). These perspectives have been inspired by a realisation that the church was likely to have had only a slow and superficial influence over burial rites that remained for families and communities to preside over (Bullough 1983; Geake 2003; Hadley 2000; 2001; 2002). Indeed, explanations for the changes and decline in grave goods might even be seen as somewhat disconnected from socio-economic or religious change, related to broader cycles of competitive expenditure in the mortuary realm (Cannon 1989). A further social context is to regard the decline and subsequent cessation of artefact deposition as part of a long-term

shift towards above-ground monumental display, whether through burial mounds or church-burial (Boddington 1990, 197; Effros 2003; Hadley 2000).

While useful in explaining overall processes of change, these socio-economic approaches do not adequately deal with the qualitative and contextual changes evident in Final Phase mortuary practices and the persistent roles of portable artefacts in certain graves. To counter this challenge, some studies have adopted a symbolic and ideological perspective including attempts to analyse the meanings of artefacts and the political contexts within which these meanings were deployed via the mortuary context (Carver 2000; Halsall 2003). It has long been recognised through a combination of archaeological and later written sources that many items of jewellery in Final Phase graves may have had an amuletic or apotropaic functions that span the traditional perception of a clear pagan/Christian divide (Meaney 1981). Indeed, the deposition of amulets and crosses seems to increase in this period, suggesting both continuity and adaptation to the new symbols of the Christian faith to protect both the living and the dead (Blair 2005, 173–5; Crawford 2004).

Notably, Helen Geake (1997; 2003) defined the Final Phase as a shift in mentality and ideology rather than either exclusively religious or social in nature. The adaptation of influences from the Frankish (and more indirectly) the Roman and Byzantine worlds shows competitive networks of ideas and ideals linking church and state and permeating Anglo-Saxon culture (Geake 1997; Marzinzik 2003). Artefacts in graves might assert political affiliations as well as new worldviews. Equally, the final decline in frequent artefact provision can be regarded as related in part to a new ideology of humility in treating the body in death. This could represent the secular utilisation of Christian monastic ideals as they were adopted and promulgated in aristocratic and royal circles rather than any direct influence from the clergy (Bazelmans 2002; Effros 2002). The artefacts found in select graves could indicate the continued use of a grave as medium for social display but also a new conception of the body in life and in death as a medium for expressing and constituting personhood (see Karkov 2003). In this regard the Anglo-Saxon evidence can be best seen as a part of a broader phenomenon of changing relationships between ideology and mortuary practice found across north-west Europe and Scandinavia in the later first millennium AD (see also Effros 2002; 2003; Halsall 2003; Marzinzik 2000; Theuws 1999).

The three interpretative themes of religion, socio-politics and symbolism/ideology are not fully satisfactory in isolation nor need they be seen as mutually exclusive. In combination rather than separately, they bring us closer to appreciate the significance of Final Phase grave goods. In particular, they encourage a contextual interpretation of mortuary artefact as more than 'pagan survivals' or as manifestations of 'popular superstitions' but the results of conscious and strategic mortuary decisions by the living about the identities of the dead (Crawford 2004; Hadley 2000; 2002).

The Exchange of Final Phase Mortuary Artefacts

These arguments have built a more sophisticated understanding of the complex interactions of society, economy, politics and religion in addressing the changing burial rites of the seventh century. Yet while serving to frame and contextualise the use of grave goods in the Final Phase, most previous work has ignored the precise ways in which selected artefacts were deployed within the mortuary process and the burial context as well as the potential commemorative significance of artefact burial. Early medieval mortuary practices were most certainly a process mediated by religious and social concepts of dying, death and the dead. Yet archaeologists have only begun to consider the static remains left in graves in

terms of the complex sequence of procedures and performances that both preceded and succeeded the interment of the corpse and how even mundane and prosaic artefacts can bring powerful memories to the fore through their association with the deceased (*e.g.* Williams 2005).

To develop such an approach, the most useful starting-point is a recent paper by Sally Crawford (2004) which focuses on the jewellery found in wealthy female graves of the seventh century. Crawford argues that the jewellery with Christian motifs placed within containers and on the bodies in such graves can best be described as 'votive' offerings. This is a crucial and significant argument. Rather than seeing mortuary artefacts as personal possessions placed simply to display the deceased's social identity, she suggests that the manner of their placement and their Christian iconography indicate an adaptation of earlier pre-Christian dedicatory and cultic practices associated with the dead and the cemetery. The principal and valuable argument that can be taken from Crawford's study is that Final Phase artefacts cannot be simplistically defined as 'grave goods' nor 'pagan survivals' but a new manifestation of traditional relationships between the living, the dead and the sacred.

Crawford re-positions the debate away from the precise identity of the deceased reflected in the choice of mortuary artefacts as well as challenging traditional associations of grave goods with afterlife beliefs. The emphasis is instead upon the relationship between the living and the dead negotiated through the deployment of selected items in the mortuary process. In this regard, artefacts in graves can be considered as exchange items between the living and the dead. Placing artefacts with the dead defined the social and religious identities of living people. Meanwhile, as gifts to the dead, they set up obligations of reciprocity and continued bonds across the divide of death. These relationships may have drawn upon both pre-Christian concepts of ancestors as sources of social and religious power as well as new, Christian, concepts of intercessory prayer by the living over the fate of the soul mediated by material culture. Crawford therefore provides us with a basis for rethinking the significance of Final Phase mortuary artefacts (see also Effros 2002; 2003).

A fuller exploration of Crawford's approach requires putting these 'votive' wealthy objects in a wider context. This will include their association with other items of costume, materials and artefacts placed with the dead, mortuary process as well as their particular positioning in relation to the dead body. In doing so, we are able to see these acts as more than elements of social display but equally as more than acts of religious devotion, but as having implications for the construction of social memories.

Final Phase Mortuary Artefacts and Social Memory

How did artefact deposition affect social memory in seventhcentury England? A useful starting point is to regard artefacts as operating within funerals as 'technologies of remembrance' (see Jones 2003). By this it is meant that rather than a representation of afterlife belief, a symbolic statement or a social display, mortuary practices were strategies for mediating the selective remembering and forgetting of the dead. This was undoubtedly a lengthy process that focused upon, and involved the careful management of, the cadaver. From death-bed to the grave and beyond, artefacts mediated this transition in commemorating an idealised vision of the person in death. Regarding the deployment of material culture in mortuary practices as technologies of remembrance enables scrutiny to be fixed upon the mnemonic efficacy of objects rather than their precise meanings of things or the manifold registers upon which social memory may have been materialised within any single artefact. This involves considering the contribution objects made to the creation of a

burial 'tableau' that would have been employed in the creation of a memorable scene during the funeral (Carver 2000; Geake 2003, 260) but also the roles of artefacts and materials in the sequential removal of the cadaver from the senses of the survivors as the grave was covered over (Halsall 2003; Williams 2006).

This approach also provides new insights into the overall explanation for the end of the frequent provision of artefacts in graves. By considering material culture as contributing to the commemorative significance of the dead, the decline and final cessation of regular grave-good provision during this period can be reinterpreted in mnemonic terms. The move in focus from artefact deposition in the grave to giving artefacts to the church and circulating them among the living can be seen as enhancing, rather than diminishing, the significance of artefacts in the commemoration of the dead. The wealthy female assemblages of the Final Phase may provide clues to this transition in artefact-use between deposition and circulation by regarding them as gifts intended to commemorate the dead.

Final Phase Graves from Harford Farm, Norfolk

A full review of seventh and early eighth-century burial sites is beyond the scope of this discussion. This paper will instead focus upon one recently-published and carefully-excavated cemetery of the Final Phase from Harford Farm, near Caistor St. Edmund, Norfolk to provide the basis for building a wider argument about the significance of portable artefacts in the commemoration of the dead (Penn 2000). The excavation in question was conducted ahead of road construction south of Norwich. In total, 47 burials in 46 west-east orientated graves were revealed. They were located in two discrete burial plots, each focusing seemingly intentionally upon a series of prehistoric burial mounds (Figure 2.1). Disappointingly, preservation within the graves was poor with the presence of human bodies only revealed through stains in the soil. This provided evidence that most graves were those of adults, positioned supine and extended in most instances (Penn 2000, 74). Organic grave goods were absent and inorganic artefacts were often poorly preserved. Despite this, the soil-stains provided valuable evidence, hinting at the provision of coffins and other organic linings and coverings in many graves.

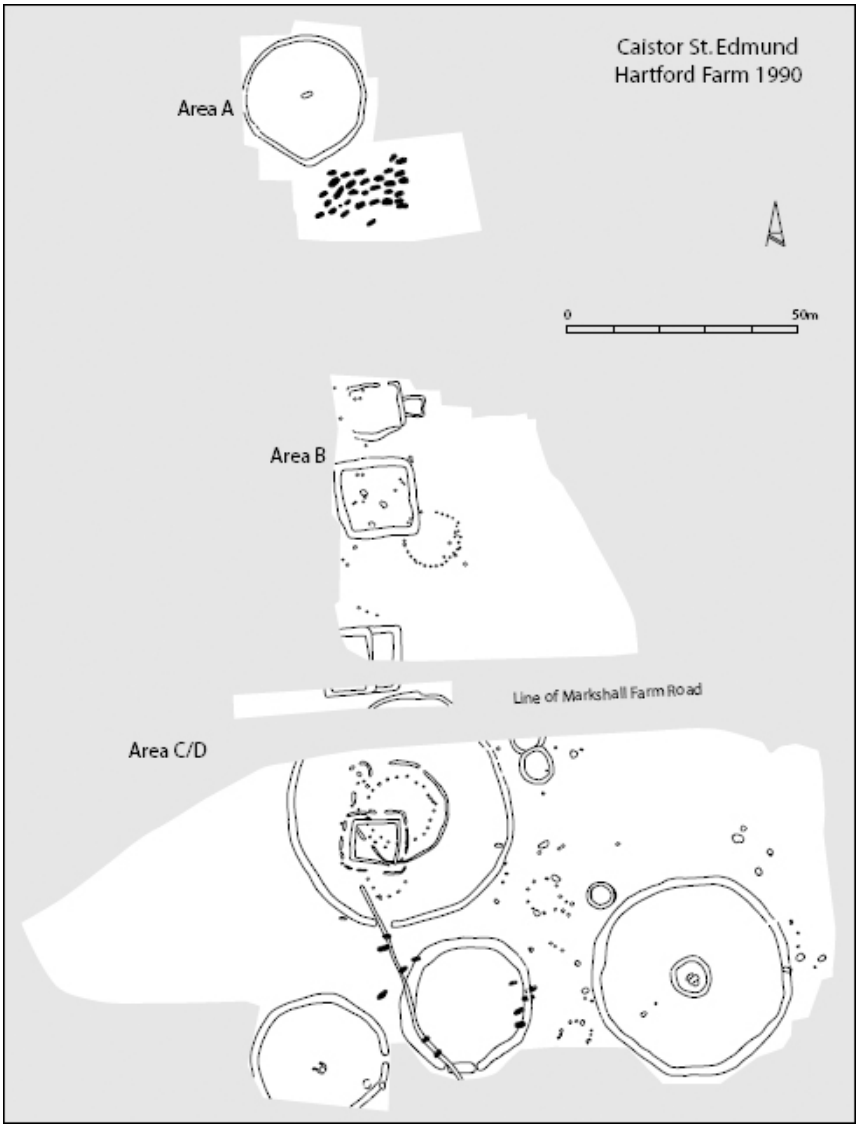

Figure 2.1: Plan of the excavations at Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund, Norfolk showing two groups of seventh/early eighth century burials focusing upon a Bronze Age barrow cemetery (Redrawn by Seán Goddard after Penn 2000).

Concerning the portable artefacts from the Harford Farm graves, only 13 out of 47 (28%) had no grave goods at all. Of the remaining 34 graves (72%), 18 (38%) had knives or knives together with buckles. Eleven (23%) were regarded as 'modestly equipped' with knives, buckles and sometimes chatelaines. Of these there was one instance of 'weapon burial', grave 25 interred with a seax. Five (11%) of the graves stand out as exceptionally rich and are the focus of the subsequent discussion.

Bearing in mind the caveat that many more artefacts may have been present but yielded no trace upon excavation, wealthy graves 11, 18, 22, 28 and 33 stand out from the rest of the burials. All date to the late seventh or very early eighth centuries and were distinguished from the rest of the graves on the basis of the number and quality of the artefacts deposited. Interestingly these burials are not set apart in terms of location, orientation or grave-size. In these aspects they seem typical. Therefore it appears that these individuals were afforded a comparable burial rite to their lesser-furnished companions, but the choice was made to distinguish them through the inclusion of a range of portable artefacts on and around the body.

It is of considerable importance that all of the five rich burials from Harford Farm are female-gender assemblages although because of the poor bone-preservation, the determination of the osteological sex of these individuals was not possible. Of equal note, the artefacts were not always located as one might expect if they were elements of the deceased's mortuary costume. This suggests that many of the artefacts had other roles in the composition of the burial assemblage than simply costume accessories. It is argued that the assemblages can be understood less in terms of the display and commemoration of the deceased's individual identity, political allegiance or religious beliefs. Instead these furnished graves were a distinctive 'technology of remembrance', they were concerned with strategies for the selective commemoration of idealised concepts of the social person. Let us explore each grave in turn to see how the artefacts were deployed in this regard.

The Five Wealthy Graves from Harford Farm

Grave 11 (Figure 2.2) revealed traces of a coffin-stain surrounding a semi-flexed body with a costume consisting of elaborate precious metal accessories suspended around the corpse's neck. They comprised of a gold, silver and garnet composite disc brooch, three silver-wire rings, eight to ten silver-wire knot rings and a silver toilet set of three items (a perforated spoon and two picks). Between the right arm and the chest were placed a knife and shears, while at the belt were three iron suspension rings and a key. Another key and a comb were placed beside the cadaver's feet and copperalloy fragments hint that further objects were placed towards the foot end of the grave (Penn 2000, 14). The grave goods appear to consist of a mortuary costume and artefacts placed into the grave by the mourners. Some of the objects might be described as heirlooms. For instance, the disc brooch had a long life-history. It was a product of Kent from the early seventh century (*c*.610–650) and on its back-plate was a runic inscription commemorating its repair sometime prior to deposition towards the end of the seventh century (Hines 2000, 80; Penn 2000, 45–9; see below).

Grave 18 (Figure 2.2) was another encoffined burial. An iron barrel-lock and key fragment found at the far west end of the grave suggest that a wooden box had been placed adjacent to the head containing an iron awl (Penn 2000, 65). Also found in the grave were a gold and garnet pendant, shears, a copper-alloy bracelet used as a suspension ring, an iron pursemount and a collection of suspended objects of unknown function (possibly an inkpot and pen-case). Of special note is a suspended bronze cylinder of a type often described as 'relic-boxes'. It contained a silver pin-set and linking chain (Penn 2000, 66–7). In stark contrast to grave 11, none of these items were situated on the body as elements of costume. The body may indeed have been clothed but with some modesty, or else the cadaver may have been loosely wrapped within a shroud. Instead of adorning the dead, the artefacts were all located alongside the northern edge of the grave in the area of the left-side of the waist and left thigh, all seemingly beside or upon the coffin. The final item is one of only two pin-

sets characteristic of Final Phase Byzantine-style jewellery from the cemetery. Its position shows that it was not placed on the body as an element of costume but concealed within the relic-box. It appears that two sceattas (silver coins) were added to the grave, possibly placed on the coffin to the right and above the head. These diagnostic items date the grave to the very early years of the eighth century (Penn 2000, 75).

The three other wealthy female-gendered graves contained artefacts deployed in a mixture between the two patterns found in graves 11 and 18. Grave 22 (Figure 2.2) contained the surviving stains of an extended supine body encoffined with two groups of artefacts. The first group consisted of the remains of a necklace or festoon at the neck comprising of silver-wire knot-rings, silver bullae and glass beads (as in grave 11). There was also a concentration along the left side of the waist (as in grave 18); a chatelaine of copper-alloy rings, beads, a buckle, a knife, a tool (possibly a pair of tweezers) and two keys (Penn 2000, 27–9).

Grave 28 (Figure 2.3) was also encoffined and contained a further division between objects located by the neck and two groups of objects by the waist. A festoon of 15 silver-wire rings and a single silver bucket-shaped pendant was found at the neck. However, other items of jewellery were found in a cluster situated outside of the coffin on the north side adjacent to the waist and left forearm of the skeleton. These included eleven bullae of a silver necklace as well as an open-work gold pendant. Also placed outside the left forearm were two spindlewhorls, two silver decorated discs, five iron rivets that may indicate the presence of a comb, and knife. Placed upon the left hip was a chatelaine consisting of an iron ring, shears, a steel, a key and a series of other undiagnosed iron objects. Evidence that the cadaver had been dressed for burial is evident from a copper-alloy shoelace tag found by the left foot, suggesting the presence of footwear (Penn 2000, 25–7).

Grave 33 (Figure 2.3) was interred without evidence of a coffin and the only one of the five to be found in the southern, more dispersed, burial group. The body seems to have been positioned in a semi-flexed posture. By the neck was a Roman intaglio mounted in a frame of twisted and beaded gold wire and showing signs of wear. Again this might be regarded as an heirloom of some kind. On the right side of the body were found two gold discs with garnets that may have adorned the outside of an adjacent leather or textile bag. Had a bag been present, its contents consisted of a necklace of silver-wire knot-rings with seventeen beads of either glass or amethyst. Also in the hypothesised bag was a silver toilet set of three implements (one of which was a perforated spoon) like those suspended from the neck of grave 11, and the remains of a chatelaine consisting of an iron ring and key. By the right leg was a pair of shears. Therefore, once again we have artefacts that *could* have been worn on the body but were instead interred within a bag.

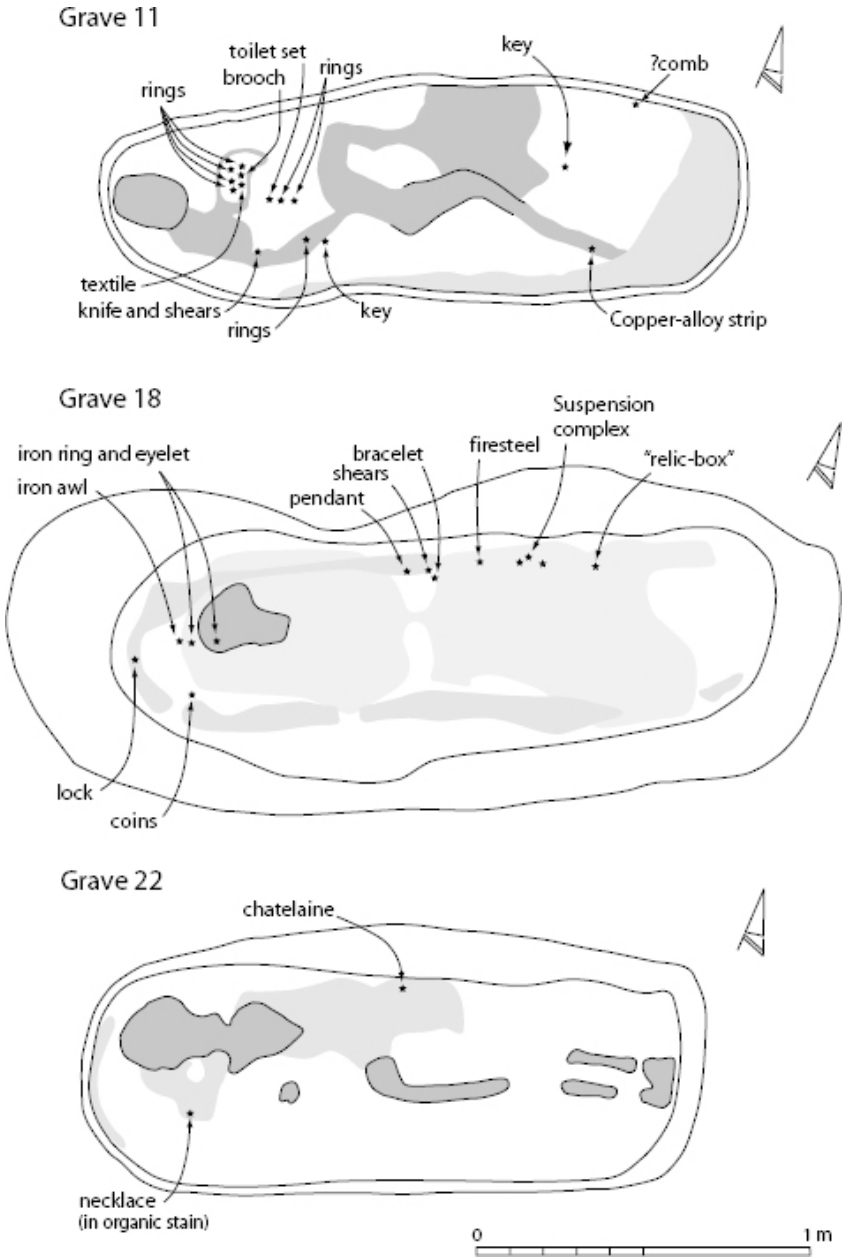

Figure 2.2: Plans of graves 11, 18 and 22 from the Harford Farm cemetery (Redrawn by Seán Goddard after Penn 2000).

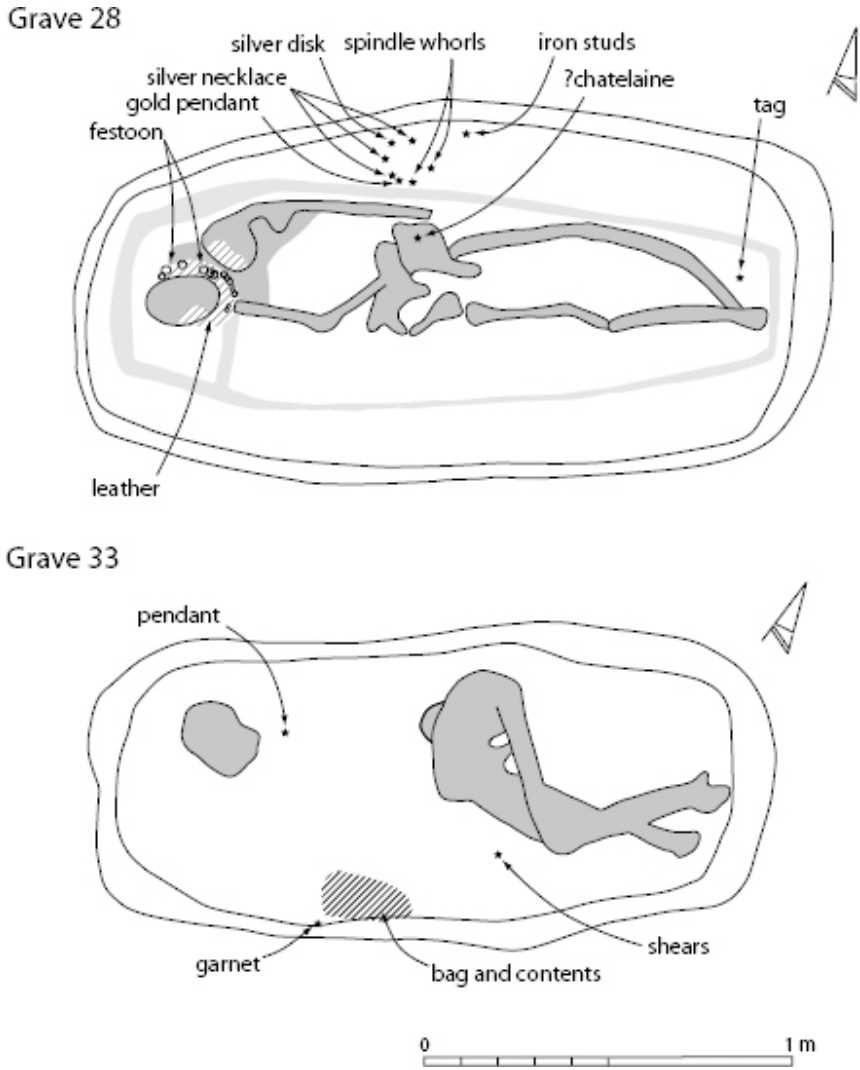

Figure 2.3: Plans of graves 28 and 33 from the Harford Farm cemetery (Redrawn by Seán Goddard after Penn 2000).

A clear distinction between mortuary costume and grave gifts is not apparent at Harford Farm. This is because comparable artefact-types could be placed both on and with the body including keys, pendants and necklaces and toilet implements. Equally, regarding the artefacts as a burial tableau is somewhat misleading. Certainly the cadaver was dressed for death in at least four out of five cases. In some cases, the mourners had placed jewellery upon the body. These artefacts may have accompanied the body through the funeral from the preparation of the body to the graveside. Yet they may have only been on view a short time before the body was encoffined and wrapped in textiles. This suggests that an appreciation of mortuary display should also consider the mnemonic efficacy of

consignment. Moreover, many of the objects were contained within bags and caskets (including items of jewellery and costume) or only placed in the grave once the coffin was in place and possibly after it was closed over, suggesting they would not have been juxtaposed with the body as part of a tableau.

The same observations apply to other prestigious objects placed in the Harford Farm graves. The one certain weaponburial from the cemetery (grave 25) had a seax enclosed in a leather sheath placed on the north side of the grave, possibly over the left side of the corpse's torso. As well as this position suggesting the blade was lain on the corpse, the seax was placed upside-down from a conventional location had it been placed as an element of 'dress'. In grave 25, the blade faced the head of the corpse (Penn 2000, 25). Furthermore, many of the basic elements of burial 'costume' at Harford Farm are not present in these five wealthy graves. Only two of the five have knives, and none of the five have belt-buckles. Therefore, despite overall similarities in grave orientation and structure, in terms of artefact provision it is difficult to see these graves as augmenting a common repertoire. They were a distinctive practice in the duration of this burying community. The artefacts were connected to discrete practices linked to the composition and consignment of the grave.

Harford Farm in Context

Much remains unclear about the mortuary process at Harford Farm and other Final Phase cemeteries. Not only are interpretations impeded by the limited bone and artefact preservation but it is unclear when in the funeral the cadaver was concealed from view (*i.e.* was it when the body was lain in-state after which the coffin remained closed, or else was the coffin only finally closed within the grave itself). Despite these many uncertainties, some broad points can be made from the available evidence.

The interaction between material culture in both mortuary display and mortuary consignment can be recognised at Harford Farm as well as in other wealthy female-gendered burial assemblages of the later seventh and early eighth centuries. For instance, grave 93 from the Boss Hall cemetery from Ipswich in Essex produced a composite brooch with evidence of repair and of some antiquity when buried. Over fifty years old when buried in the early eighth century, the brooch was placed together with a gold and silver necklace and a silver toilet set in a box and not as a visible part of the burial costume (Webster and Backhouse 1991, 51–3; Scull 2009, 120). In grave 4275 at the nearby Buttermarket cemetery, a necklet was enclosed within a pouch at the waist of an adult female (Scull 2009, 152–154, 283). Meanwhile, grave 14 at Lechlade in Gloucestershire contained a female aged between 14 and 16 years. A silver pin-suite and a necklace of silver-wire rings, silver pendants on silver-wire rings and beads together with a mounted beaver tooth pendant were all found at the neck forming a part of the mortuary costume. However the other items including iron shears, a cowrie shell, fragments of a glass vessel, glass beads and a 'relic-box' were hidden from view within a wooden box left of the lower legs of the internment (Boyle *et. al*. 1998, 58–9, 156). A further example is the isolated adult female from the Eton Rowing Lake site. Suspended from her neck was an heirloom (an old and broken silver ring). Meanwhile a broken amethyst pendant formed part of a 'bag collection' together with two bronze discs, an iron nail, a lead object, bone rod and bronze strap (Boyle *et al*. 2002, 31–3). These items were found underneath the left pelvis, perhaps suggesting a deliberate element of concealment within the grave. The same 'concealed' location of a bag collection was noticed in a late seventh or early eighth century female grave from Orsett, Essex (Webster 1985). This theme appears even among the wealthiest female graves of the period,

as with the Swallowcliffe Down bed-burial inserted into a prehistoric burial mound high on the downland of southern Wiltshire. This disturbed grave lacks a complete assemblage, yet we can recognise that many of the artefacts were contained within vessels and boxes, themselves possibly covered with textiles during the sequence of the burial rituals (Speake 1989; see Williams 2006, 28–30).

Set against this wider context, the review of the five wealthy female graves at Harford Farm shows a more complex and layered relationship between the cadaver and artefacts in the mortuary process. The selection of objects were not simply 'personal possessions and jewellery' linked to 'mundane' associations (Penn 2000, 98) nor simply offerings indicative of Christian devotion (Crawford 2004). Moreover, it is the contention that reducing the objects to define the graves' occupants' social or religious identity overlooks the commemorative significance of staging both display and consignment in early medieval mortuary practices. In this regard, artefacts were displayed and disposed of to create specific menmonic connections to the dead among the living. For example, locking objects in caskets and sealing them in bags and containers may have defined an intimate engagement between the living and the dead through gift-giving.

A focus on the 'meaning' of the artefacts found in the wealthy graves from Harford Farm is only partially successful. The artefacts selected did not compose a single message. Instead, it appears that artefacts were associated with a constellation of practices and the display and management of the female body (*e.g.* jewellery and toilet implements). Moreover, we have seen the importance of the artefacts selected for their amuletic properties (including crosses) that may perhaps have been intended to protect the body in life and in death through magic (whether pagan or Christian). There are objects that may have had significant biographical histories (some were very old when interred like the pin-set inside the relic box in grave 18) as well as apotropaic and symbolic qualities. Finally there are objects connected with the household and household activities, including the casket with lock and key in grave 18 and the shears in graves 22 and 28. The burial of the key with the box may have in itself been a statement of consignment and dedication; only the dead person could access its contents in the grave (Buckberry *pers. comm.*). Perhaps most importantly, only those allowed to engage with the cadaver at close quarters during the mortuary practices leading up to the burial would have known what was interred within.

Engendered Bodies

What connects this diverse material culture is an association with the social construction of the body and the body's use to mediate the relational identities of the living and the deceased. Moreover the artefacts deployed were significant because of their use, not simply through their design and form. They were associated with bodily management but also ways of doing things, what Connerton refers to as 'bodily practices' (see Connerton 1989). The placing and consignment of these objects within the grave may have been intended to evoke a wider set of ideals and metaphors concerning the identity of selected female adults in life and upon their death. These may have concerned with the household and agricultural production as well as concerns over spiritual protection. Gender construction and commemoration is also a powerful theme. In other words, an idealised concept of the social person was constructed and rendered memorable within the grave through its composition and subsequent consignment (see Fowler 2004; Williams 2006).

Why were rich collections of artefacts only afforded to selected adult females? Certainly it would be problematic to 'read-off' the social status of the graves' occupants directly from

the wealth afforded to them in death. However, it may be possible to suggest a specific significance for certain adult females in a community's social structure and commemorative strategies that meant their deaths demanded particular mortuary practices of this kind. As custodians of the future in their roles as potential or real mothers, female-members of households may have been regarded as a particular loss for the community if they died untimely or 'bad' deaths. Similarly, given the prominent role envisaged for certain women in early medieval mourning rituals, these were individuals who may have had a special role as custodians of the past, mediating and configuring social memory for families as well as the wider community (see Innes 2001). This dual function for particular women may have drawn upon traditional pre-Christian perceptions of the continuity-crisis instigated by adult-female deaths (see Williams 2007) and the roles of particular women as practitioners of magic and possibly control over funerary and mourning rituals (*e.g.* Dickinson 1993; see also Geake 2003; Price 2002). It may have also been enhanced by the particular status afforded to certain women in the earliest stages of the conversion process as envisaged for both Anglo-Saxon England and Scandinavia (Blair 2005; Gräslund 2003; Staecker 2003). The commemorative role of early Christian women in Anglo-Saxon England and their subsequent prominent mortuary commemoration has tended to focus on those women that took up the monastic life and the cults that developed around their graves (*e.g.* Karkov 2003). Yet this may have been only one facet in the role of women in mortuary commemoration. The deaths of these particular aristocratic women may have equally mediated the identities and social memories of secular communities. The strategic deployment of selected artefacts could have defined such group histories through mortuary commemoration, marking both the end of artefact circulation and inheritance and new beginnings for the community and family (see also Sayer 2009).

Therefore, these individuals were not necessarily any more 'high status' or 'less Christian' because of the presence of grave goods in comparison with other contemporary inhumations with no or few artefacts. Instead, the investment in wealth was intended to promote social memory through the gendered cadaver by the survivors. What is becoming increasingly clear to archaeologists is that while the deployment of artefacts became sporadic and varied in later Anglo-Saxon England (Hadley 2000; 2002) and persisted intermittently throughout the later Middle Ages (Williams 2003; Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 228–30), it remained a deliberate choice in mortuary commemoration used at particular times to protect the dead physically and spiritually but also to mediate their commemoration. In other words, these rich female grave assemblages reflected the influence of Christian conversion and kingdom formation in broad terms but more specifically they indicate new concepts of the female aristocratic body as a medium for constituting gendered and elite identities. Material culture connected to the body's appearance, management and protection as well as bodily practices mediated these embodied identities in the mortuary context when consigned to the grave with the cadaver.

Objects of Memory

The contextual evidence from the Harford Farm therefore allows a more qualified perspective on the commemorative significance of Final Phase grave goods. Moreover, indirectly, this encourages an alternate perspective on the mnemonics of objects with biographies like those found at the Harford Farm cemetery. The traditional view of the end of grave goods regards their absence from graves as evidence that they were instead paid to the king as tax or replaced by elite gifts to the church and/or investment in more effective

and enduring above-ground commemorative media including mausolea and chapels (*e.g.* Bullough 1983). This argument remains important. However, middle Anglo-Saxon England between the late seventh and early ninth century is renowned for a set of well-preserved but poorly-provenanced high-status sets of jewellery and other items of treasure from the Witham Pins to the Coppergate Helmet (Webster and Backhouse 1991). Dawn Hadley (2001, 108–9) and Sally Crawford (2004) have both recognised the continued importance of portable artefacts in ritual exchanges into the Christian era. In this light, although these items are no longer placed in graves, they were prestige objects that were commissioned and displayed by elites, circulated among the living, given to the Church and disposed of in watery places (Stocker and Everson 2003) and within settlements (Thomas 2008). Detached from a secure mortuary context, the evidence is patchy and ambiguous. Yet it is tempting, drawing upon contemporary written and archaeological sources, to consider an enduring and complex set of practices by which portable artefacts retained a mnemonic efficacy through circulation and disposal. These uses of portable artefacts can be understood in terms of new Christian commemorative media as well as in terms of an aristocratic class sustaining their social relations and inventing group histories through the use of material culture in complex patterns of gift-giving and ritual practices (see Bazelmans 2000; Hadley 2001, 108–9). For example, Heinrich Härke (2000) has developed this argument using both later Anglo-Saxon written sources and archaeological evidence to show the ritual circulation of weapons in particular may have served in social reproduction and political legitimisation in which ritual deposition and exchange were constituent elements. It is not difficult to extend this argument to envisage parallel cycles of circulation related other artefacts such as jewellery, amulets and vessels focusing on the aristocratic hall (see Bazelmans 2000). Through their production/acquisition, exchange as gifts, display within treasuries and ritual deposition, these exchanges made them objects of memory (Llilios 1999); artefacts that through their decoration, form, inscriptions and the stories attached to them, recorded and commemorated the alliances and identities of those associated with their 'life-histories'. These relationships could have incorporated the commemoration of the dead if they were inherited and if they were gifted to the church in exchange for prayers for the dead. In such an environment, we can suggest that selected artefacts – including both weapons and jewellery – were more than repositories of economic wealth, but valued mnemonic tools that connected the living and the dead through their use and circulation (see also Devlin 2009). Indeed, we might view this ritual and commemorative exchange of artefacts instigated by elites in the Christian early Middle Ages as the secular basis upon which the circulation of saint's relics was able to thrive (Geary 1986).

In this light, the deposition of objects of considerable value and age in graves at sites like Harford Farm might be regarded less as the tail-end of furnished burial and more as evidence for increasingly sophisticated strategies in which portable artefacts were selectively deployed in mortuary and commemorative exchanges. It is therefore possible to regard the decline in gravegoods deposition as heralding an enhanced commemorative role for jewellery and weapons as *objects of memory* – accruing prestige and associations through their circulation among the living rather than their deposition with the dead.

Conclusion

Portable artefacts served in the commemoration of the dead through *both* their transformation and burial with the cadaver *and* their circulation among the living in the later fifth and sixth centuries AD in southern and eastern England (Williams 2005). Here, the

argument has been extended to suggest that artefacts in Final Phase graves retained their commemorative significance but were deployed in novel ways. In the later seventh and eighth centuries, certain female-gendered artefacts used in regimes of body management and adornment accrued a mnemonic significance through their mortuary display and consignment through staged and sequential association with the cadaver. Moreover, the development of kingdoms and Christian-influenced aristocratic concepts of the body and material culture provided the potential for select artefacts to take on even more complex mnemonic roles. Rather than the replacement of portable artefacts with monuments as a medium for early medieval commemoration (*e.g*. Effros 2003, 200–18), this evidence instead suggests that the final end of furnished burial marked a new significance of jewellery and weapons in mortuary commemoration through their display and gift-giving among the living. The aristocratic hall and the church both provided important settings in which portable material culture mediated social memories and identities. In this sense, the Final Phase female assemblages from Harford Farm illustrate both the commemorative use of artefacts in the construction of the aristocratic engendered body and an enhanced role for artefacts as objects of memory in the seventh century and beyond.

Acknowledgements

This paper reflects the development of arguments originally made in Williams 2006: 65–78. Thanks to East Anglian Archaeology for permission to reproduce the illustrations and to Seán Goddard for re-drawing them. Thanks to Jo Buckberry, Annia Cherryson, Elizabeth Williams and the anonymous referee for commenting on earlier versions of the paper.

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3. Burial Practice in Seventh-Century Hampshire: St Mary's Stadium in Context

Nick Stoodley

Introduction – The Saints Come Home

In August 2001 Southampton Football Club (a.k.a. The Saints) played the first match in their new stadium. The site chosen was in the St Mary's area of the city, an appropriate location because the club was formed by members of St Mary's Church in 1885. It was known however to overlap with the mainly eighth- to ninth-century mercantile settlement of Hamwic (Andrews 1997; Morton 1992), and the potential for disturbing archaeological deposits was high. This was confirmed by an evaluation in late 1998 and early 1999 and the subsequent excavation by Wessex Archaeology revealed and recorded a complex range of burials and settlement features (Birbeck 2005).

The focus of this article is an assessment of the burial archaeology from these excavations. In the first half the range and variety of practices at St Mary's will be described and discussed while in the second half the information will be evaluated by comparing it to contemporary practice both locally in Southampton and in the wider context of Hampshire. The enquiry will also include Bargates, Christchurch (Dorset) (Jarvis 1983), originally in the historic county boundaries of Hampshire and the two cemeteries investigated at Apple Down (West Sussex) (Down and Welch 1990) which are located close to the Hampshire border and demonstrate very similar practices to the southern Hampshire group of cemeteries (Stoodley *forthcoming*).

It will be argued that during the seventh and early eighth-century mortuary behaviour in Hampshire is characterised by a hitherto unexpected degree of diversity. This is witnessed in the type of rite, the form of the cemetery and its location in the landscape, and is a finding that is in contrast to the traditional image presented by the final-phase model. Explanations for this diverse range of mortuary strategies will be sought in the specific political and cultural circumstances affecting Hampshire at this time.

Accommodating the Ancestors

The new home of Southampton F.C. covers an area of 4.5 ha, lying one km east of the city centre and about 100 m to the west of the River Itchen (Figure 3.1); although in Saxon times the site would have been very close to the shore of the Itchen and the waterfront area of the middle Saxon Emporium. Intervention took place in those areas that were directly affected by the development *i.e.* the stands. Archaeology in the areas of the football pitch and the car parks surrounding the stadium was preserved *in situ*, a strategy that has made

the interpretation of the site problematic – the presence of further burials and other deposits underneath the pitch is strongly suspected.

An interesting aside is that it took Southampton six games before they recorded their first home win at St Mary's and in some quarters the disturbance of the Saxon dead was held responsible for this dismal performance!

The Early Cemetery

The following details have been kept brief and are intended to highlight the main points. A full description and discussion can be found in the report published by Wessex Archaeology (Birbeck 2005). Two separate burial grounds were excavated. In the north (Northam) stand a group of unaccompanied inhumations were discovered that exhibit a very similar rite to burials from Hamwic. In addition, a single radiocarbon date (burial 7381) gave a calibrated date of AD 650–950 (expressed at the 95% confidence level) supporting the notion that the inhumations belonged to a cemetery of the later eighth and ninth century. In the west (Kingsland) stand part of a mixed rite cemetery was discovered (Figure 3.2). And a possible outlier to this group consisting of a double inhumation of two adults with weapons was found in the south (Chapel) stand. It is the group of graves in the west stand that is the main focus of this article. Before turning to examine these graves it should be mentioned that in 1975 at SOU 20, just to the west of the Kingsland stand, two weapon burials of probable late seventh-century date were found (Holdsworth 1980) and given their proximity they almost certainly indicate the continuance of the St Mary's cemetery in this direction.

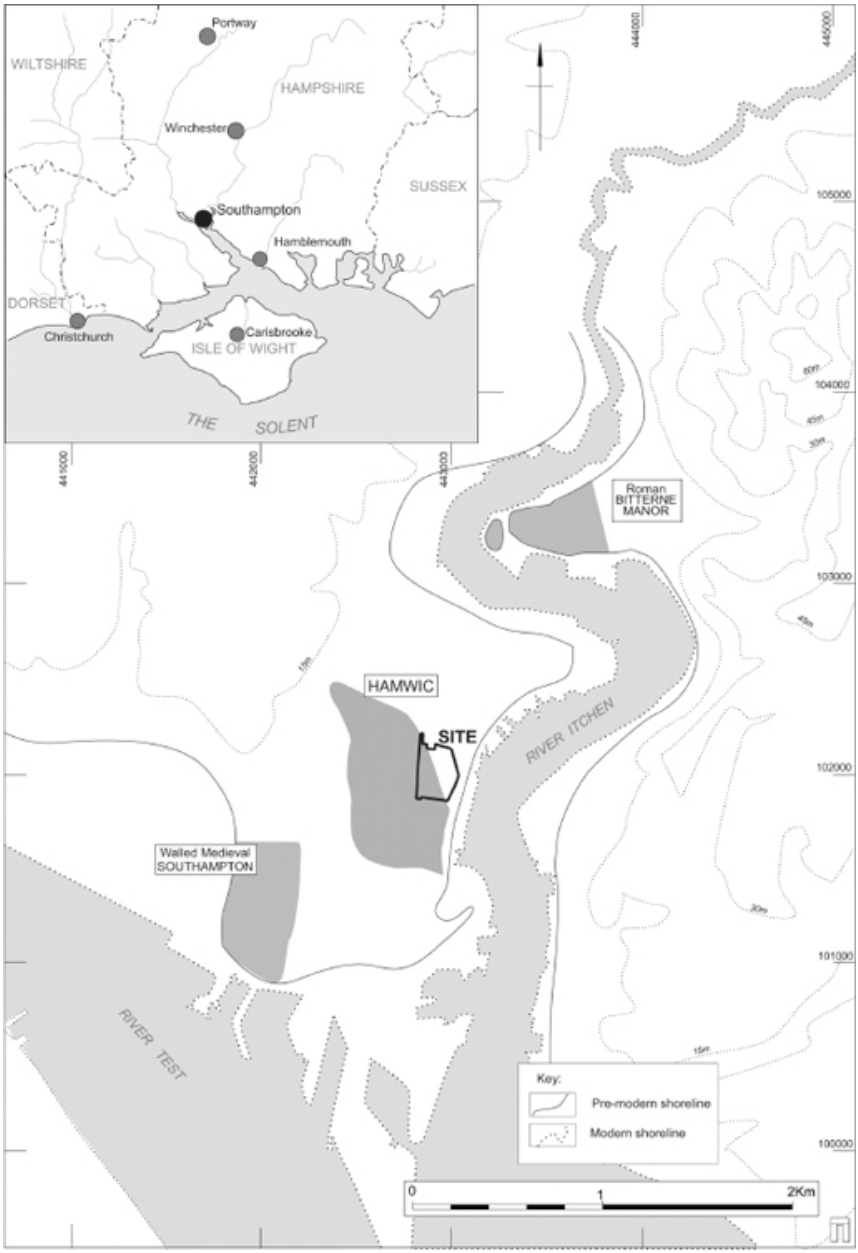

Figure 3.1: Location of St Mary's cemetery (Birbeck 2005, fig. 1).

Grave	Material	Context/urn	Result BP	Calibrated result (2 sigma)
7138	charcoal *Corylus*	7140	1245 ± 40	cal AD 670–880
7138	cremated human bone	7140	1510 ± 45	cal AD 430–630
5106	charcoal *Corylus*	5107	1350 ± 40	cal AD 610–770
5114	charcoal *Corylus*	5115	1420 ± 45	cal AD 550–680
5134	cremated human bone	5135	1540 ± 45	cal AD 420–610
7381	human bone	7381	1245 ± 70	cal AD 650–95

Table 3.1: Radiocarbon dates (after Allen 2005, table 1).

In total the investigations produced 26 inhumations in 25 graves and 18 cremations. An examination of the arrangement of the main group of graves demonstrates little evidence for any coherent organisation. The two rites are to a certain extent separate which incidentally is similar to what is found in some sixth-century burial grounds in Hampshire, *e.g*. Portway East (Cook and Dacre 1985), although different spatial relationships are also noted, for example at Worthy Park (Hawkes and Grainger 2003) the two rites are intermingled. It is possible that at St Mary's the graves may have been placed in rough rows, but on the available evidence it does not appear to have been a managed cemetery in the same way that some of the final-phase burial grounds are. Burials belonging to different ages and sexes are interspersed throughout the excavated area. It should be cautioned that because of the incompleteness of the excavation and the poor bone preservation, which has resulted in a lack of sex and age determinations for some burials, we cannot be certain of this, however. Overall, it is interesting that the layout and organisation of St Mary's has more in common with the rural sixth-century cemeteries in Hampshire, than the later final-phase grounds, a suggestion that has also been made for the earlier of the Hamwic cemeteries (Scull 2001, 71–2).

The dating of the inhumation graves is dependent on the associated artefacts and allows several to be placed in the period of the later seventh to early eighth century. Determining the date of the cremations was somewhat more problematic because of the lack of diagnostic artefacts and vessel forms and fabrics, although the predominance of organic-tempered wares may point to a date as early as the sixth century for some of the vessels (Mepham 2005, 26–27). To help clarify the picture a series of radiocarbon dates were taken from calcined bone and samples of charcoal (Table 3.1). The results from the charcoal are considered more accurate because the radiocarbon dating of cremated bone is still in an experimental stage and has produced dates considerably earlier than that returned by independently dated material (Allen 2005, 11–13). A similar finding was returned by St Mary's burial 7138.

Overall, the combined information from both burial traditions strongly indicates that the cemetery was founded before the establishment of Hamwic, possibly as early as the sixth century, but that for a time during the seventh century the two rites were contemporary. The presence of cremation taking place during the seventh century, although relatively rare, is not without parallels: the cemeteries of Apple Down I (Down and Welch 1990) and Weston Colley, Micheldever, (Fern and Stoodley 2005) have both produced late cremations (see below). At St Mary's the radiocarbon dates from the charcoal provided a date range from the late sixth to late ninth century, although the survival of this rite post 700 is considered unlikely. Its decline during the seventh century has traditionally been seen as resulting from Christian belief and ideas about how the dead should be treated (Boddington 1990, 179–82). Strong archaeological evidence is provided by the absence of such deposits in final-phase cemeteries. Moreover there is a lack of associations between cremated remains and later

types of pottery fabrics, although it is possible that less visible forms, such as unurned deposits may have outlived the seventh century. The important point is that for a time during the seventh century both practices were being followed at St Mary's – there was a choice of methods of disposal available to this community.

The Graves

Let us turn to survey the different rites starting with the cremations. All the excavated remains were found urned and were mainly contained within simple rounded jar/bowl forms, although two had been buried in biconical jars (Figure 3.3). Seven of the urns were burnished and six had decoration that including tooling, stamps and bosses (Mepham 2005, 24). Twelve of the burials sustained damage through later cultivation and building activity (Mepham 2005, 23) and it is possible that evidence for any unurned deposits may have been lost altogether. A few fragmentary pyre goods were retrieved from the deposits, such as the ivory bag ring from grave 5126. The most notable is a circular bone or antler object decorated with a ring and dot motif from grave 7138. The lack of accompanying artefacts is generally typical of cremation in Hampshire (Table 3.2) and is clearly illustrated by the examples from Portway East: most of the identified objects are the remains of heat-distorted dress accessories. Similar findings are true of Apple Down and Worthy Park (Hawkes and Grainger 2003), although for the latter the objects tend to consist of toilet items. The St Mary's burials exhibit other features that are typical of cremation in Hampshire. The first point of interest is the generally low quantity of cremated bone in the deposits: at St Mary's the weight varies considerably with an overall range of 7.9–697.3g, and a mean for the adult deposits of 301.8g (McKinley 2005, 21–22). This is very different to the situation in Anglian areas where a greater quantity of material is found, but is similar to the situation in other south of England cemeteries (McKinley 2005, 22). Likewise, a regional distinction in mortuary behaviour is evidenced by the lack of additional individuals found in the urns from St Mary's and elsewhere in southern England (McKinley 2005). And finally, the examples from St Mary's and Hampshire typically have a low percentage of cremated animals and pyre debris, which again differs to the north and east of the country (McKinley 2005). The St Mary's cremations seem to belong to a distinctive practice that was established in Hampshire probably sometime during the fifth century and represents a real regional difference within southern England. To illustrate this we can take a quick look at the evidence provided by the Upper Thames Valley cemetery at Abingdon (Oxfordshire) (Leeds and Harden 1936). This was a mixed rite burial ground that produced 82 cremations and makes for a particularly good example because of the extensiveness of the excavations and, for its time, the careful recording of deposits. Of the cremations, 38 were contained within vessels displaying decorative motifs and 34 were discovered to have had pyre goods. The majority of the objects were toilet implements, but a wide range of other objects were also recovered, such as items of jewellery, personal equipment, such as four knives, and the fragmentary remains of vessels.

Figure 3.2: Seventh- to earlier eighth-century cemetery under the West Stand (Birbeck 2005, fig. 9).

Cemetery	No. cremations	No. urned cremations	No. with grave/pyre goods
Alton	46	*c.*27	13
Apple Down I	*c.*63	34	18
Portway East	*c.*87	65	17
Worthy Park	46	46	9

Table 3.2: Fifth- to sixth-century cremations in Hampshire (note: Apple Down I also includes several

seventh-century cremations).

It is now time to briefly survey the evidence provided by the inhumations. Grave structure is generally standardised and unspectacular: sub-rectangular pits, several individuals were encoffined and a couple also had their location marked with posts. All the burials were laid out extended supine and all but the grave in the south stand contained a single interment: G3520 of two individuals both with weapons (a poorly preserved unsexed adult of 18 years or older and another unsexed adult judged to be between 25 and 35 years of age). The author's analysis of the multiple burial rite has shown that pairings of two adults of the same sex is rare, especially if both are accompanied by weapons (Stoodley 2002b, 112–14). Given the unusual nature of this grave it is tempting to view it as an outlier and spatially separate from the other interments, although this idea has to remain conjectural because of the large expanse of unexcavated ground beneath the football pitch. The majority of the pits were orientated west-east (n=19), although a small group recorded a northsouth (n=4) alignment and this variation is more typical of early Anglo-Saxon burial practice (Stoodley 1999a, 63–4; fig. 54) and contrasts with the standardised layout typical of final-phase cemeteries.

The evidence is starting to demonstrate that within the context of the seventh and eighth century St Mary's is unusual and this is reinforced by the grave goods. In the excavated sample, 21 of the 26 interments (*c*.80%), were provided with artefacts and this is surprisingly high given the cemetery's date (Figure 3.4). The majority of the burials produced simple assemblages, such as a knife and buckle, and is generally typical of the time, but several burials clearly stand out. Two of the females illustrate this: grave 4202 (a possible female adult of 18–25 years) interred with a wooden box containing amongst other objects a decorated silver disc, two silver sceattas and a necklace made up of four silver *bullae* pendants, four glass beads and a gold pendant; and 5508 (a female of late adolescence or young adult age) accompanied with a necklace comprising a gold pendant inland with garnets, a silver intaglio ring and two glass beads. At the time of their discovery, the presence of gold jewellery grabbed the headlines and claims about the high status of the occupants were made, although it should be noted that such wealth is not out of step with some of the better furnished females from final-phase cemeteries (Stoodley 2002a, 323–24) (see below). The quantity of individuals interred with weapons (n=10/42%) is genuinely noteworthy, however. As a percentage of the adult sample this is a comparable figure to that recorded by the male populations in Hampshire's early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries: Andover (60%), Worthy Park (56%) and Alton (40%). It is not only the quantity of weapon burials that requires comment, but also the character of several of the assemblages. Grave 5352 produced a pair of spears, a seax and a shield, while 5537 was accompanied by a sword, seax, two spears and a shield (Figure 3.5). The latter is a very unusual combination indeed and such complexity is rare outside the tier of seventh-century princely and aristocratic burials. This pair easily ranks amongst the most complex and wealthy that Hampshire has so far had to offer.

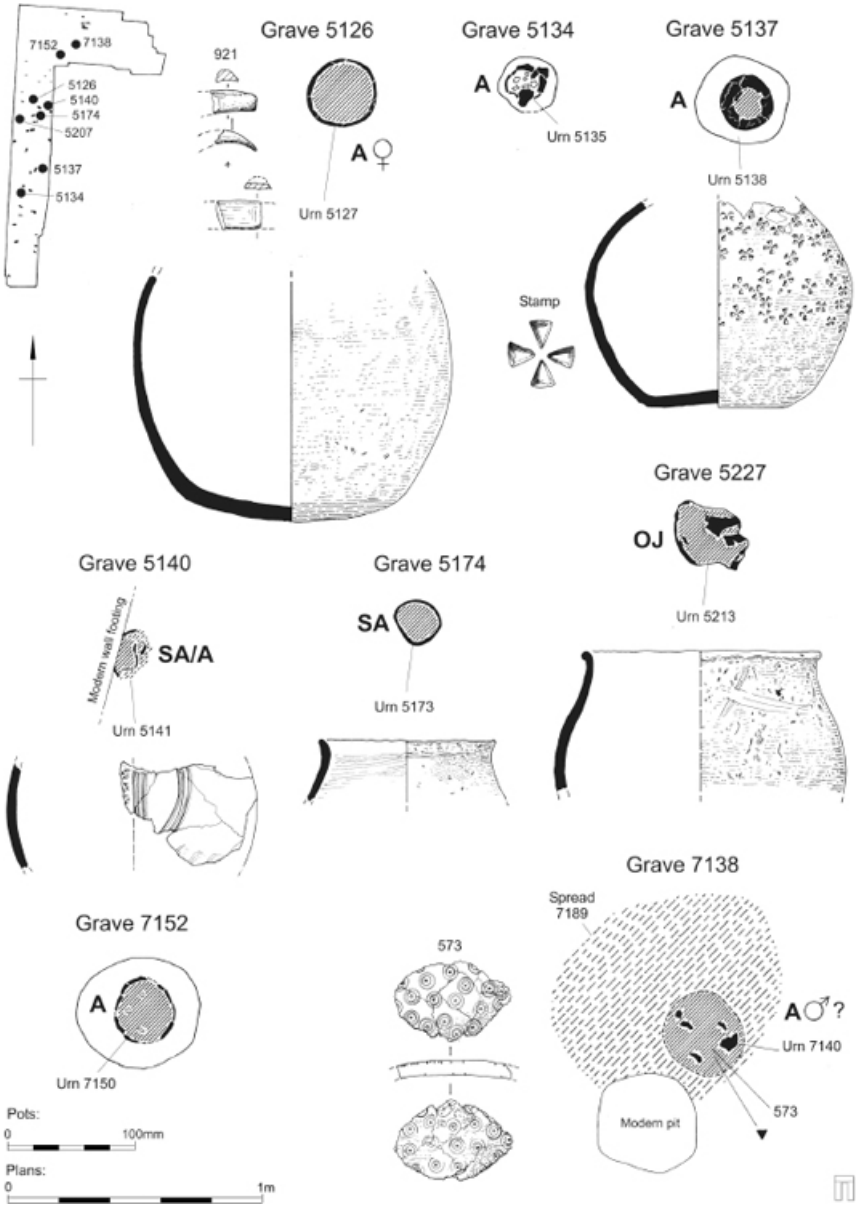

Figure 3.3: Cremation burials 5126–7152 (Birbeck 2005, fig. 11).

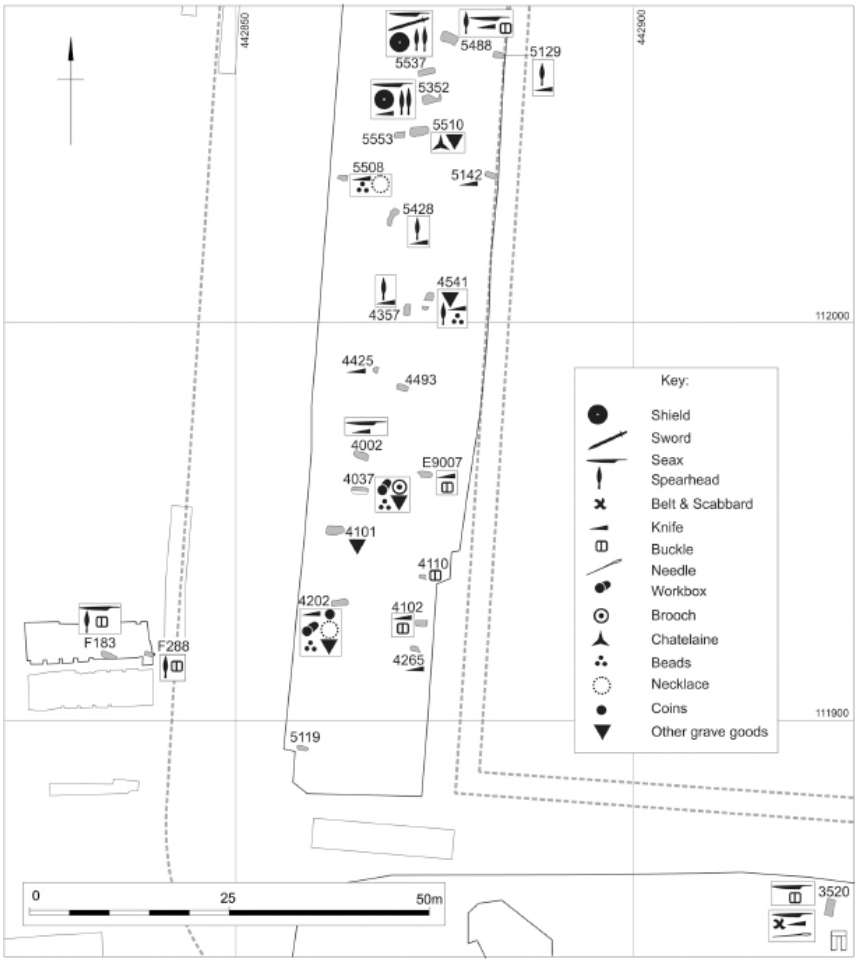

Figure 3.4: Distribution and composition of grave good assemblages (inhumations) (Birbeck 2005, fig. 31).

St Mary's and Southampton

The burials from St Mary's will probably always enjoy a high profile in the archaeological literature, but it is quite probable that this was not the only location available for burial in the immediate area. Excavations in the St Mary's area of the city have produced evidence for several cemeteries that have been dated to the earliest phase of Hamwic's occupation. But on closer inspection a number of the burials do not look out of place in the later seventh century. For example 200m west of the stadium at SOU 32/47 a grave with beads and one with a glass vessel was excavated. Moreover evidence of a penannular ditch was found (Morton 1992, 171–176) and a sample of human bone gave a radiocarbon date of the late seventh to eighth century for one of the burials. At a similar distance, but to the south-west, at SOU 34/43/48 an interment with keys, pin and a glass vessel was investigated (Morton 1992, 51), while *c*.500m to the south-west at the cemetery focussing on Cook Street (SOU

254/823), several graves were enclosed by annular and penannular ditches (Garner 1994; Garner and Vincent 1997; Garner 2001). One burial was accompanied by a knife and set of linked pins and along with several unstratified pins, knives and a chain suggest a point of origin in the later seventh century.

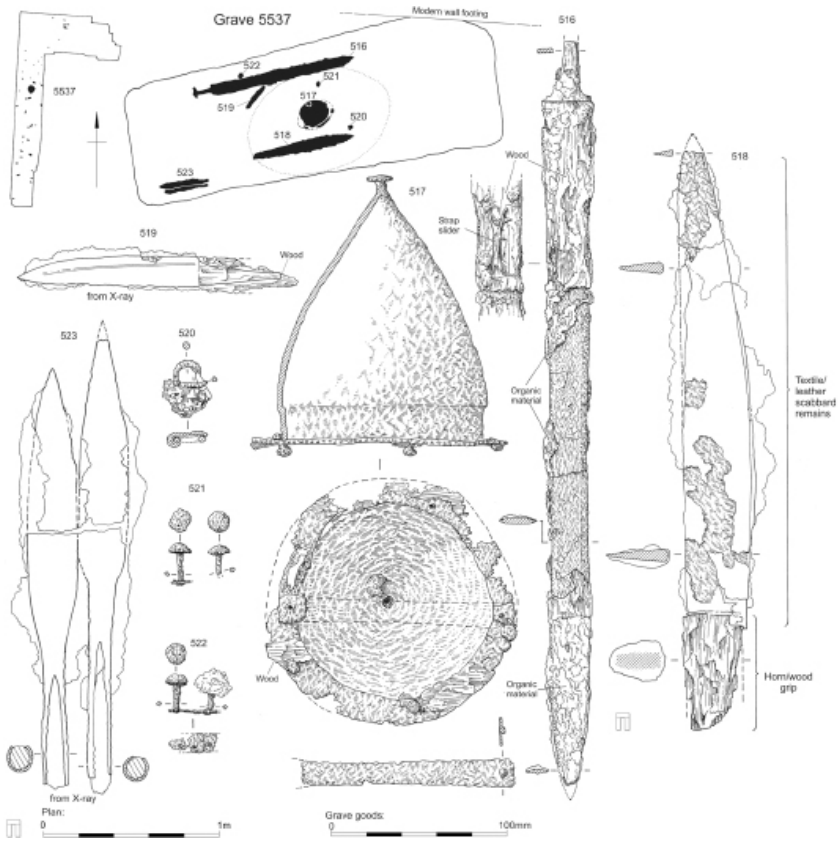

Figure 3.5: Grave goods accompanying G5537 (Birbeck 2005, figs 27 and 28).

Before we leave Southampton we should not overlook the very intriguing discoveries made in the Roman site at Bitterne Manor. Over the years numerous graves have been encountered and at least some of them are contemporary with St Mary's. For example, a burial was found with a Swanton Type C2 spearhead (found predominantly in the seventh century) from a group of at least six interments excavated at the corner of Hawkeswood Road and Bitterne Road (SOU 414) (Stoodley 2004), while 15 skeletons were recorded at Bitterne road in 1998 (SOU 862), two producing radiocarbon dates of AD 640–687 and AD 564–775 (SAS108/SOU862) (Southern Archaeological Services 1998).

Another important issue is the landscape context of St Mary's and the Bitterne cemetery. We have already noted that St Mary's would have been close to the Saxon waterfront and was not occupying an elevated location typical of Hampshire's early cemeteries. In addition, the graves are relatively well spaced and all could have been covered by small

earthen barrows, although it should be cautioned that no evidence for such features was found. In several instances there is enough room to permit a larger earthwork, for example graves 4202 and 5428 both have an area of about 10m separating them from their closest neighbours. These putative features would have increased the visibility of the cemetery within the context of the mouth of the Itchen and the immediately surrounding area. St Mary's was very close to the shoreline and it can be suggested that it was deliberately sited in order to be in clear view of traffic coming in and out of the mouth of the Itchen. This was an important river and appears to have been home to numerous agricultural communities by the seventh century (Stoodley 2005, 190), in addition to the old civitas capital of Venta Belgarum (Winchester) that was to emerge as an important religious centre with the founding of the Old Minster in the later seventh century (Yorke 1982). The spatial relationship of St Mary's to the river and the later settlement is different to the pattern exhibited at both Ipswich and London. Like at Hamwic the sites of these important middle Saxon wics produced an early phase of burial, but it is interesting that at both the dead were located on the edge of settlement activity in a location that placed them away from the waterfront (Scull 2002, 308, fig. 4).

Site	Number of graves with multiple burial and no. with consecutive burials
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0
Bitterne	8/0

Table 3.3: Hampshire cemeteries in the sample (note Apple Down I = identified seventh-century burials only).

The cemetery located in the Roman settlement of Bitterne raises many interesting questions, but in a different way. In particular, what was the site's relationship to the community burying downriver on the opposite side of the river at St Mary's? Was it just another suitable location for burial, or given its location on the east side of the Itchen, did it serve a separate and independent community? It is notable that the cemetery was again in a strategically important position: on a promontory on a bend of the Itchen (Fig. 3.1). But it is also enclosed within the old Roman walls and would presumably have been screened from view. Are we seeing evidence for a different burial tradition whereby the presence of physical boundaries was more important than visual prominence, or alternatively did it result from a deliberate strategy imposed on the group, perhaps by the elite of St Mary's, who wished to conceal the memory and also political significance of other groups in the area? It is in this context that the distinctively different burial customs at St Mary's can perhaps be explained: a strategy whereby the group articulated their separateness to the surrounding communities by way of the long-lasting visibility afforded by the inhumation graves and the shortlived, but impressive, spectacle of cremation (for the latter see Williams 2006, 90–93).

St Mary's and Burial in Seventh – Eighth Century Hampshire

The article will now consider how the evidence from St Mary's compares to contemporary

practice in the county. Hampshire is relatively well served by cemeteries of the seventh- to earlier eighth-century date. The most famous is Winnall II (Meaney and Hawkes 1970) – an archetype final-phase cemetery, yet there are others and each demonstrates distinctive features, which along with St Mary's reveals a scene that was both dynamic and multifaceted.

In order to facilitate a comparison the same themes that were examined at St Mary's will now be considered beginning with the method of disposal. Inhumation is the predominant rite, although cremation is present in several of the sites. It has been identified at Apple Down I (West Sussex) by several unstratified artefacts, and by cremations 159 and 43A and B that are dated to the seventh century (Down and Welch 1990, 108). The latter (43A) was cut into a ring-ditch surrounding an unurned cremation deposit. It produced a garnet stud of seventh-century date and was in turn overlaid by an unurned cremation (43B) thus demonstrating a sequence of late cremations. At Weston Colley, Micheldever (Hampshire), the ring-ditch surrounding a seventh-century female inhumation was closely associated with a number of disturbed cremation deposits (Fern and Stoodley 2005, 17) (Figure 3.6). The pit of at least one of these was overlying the ditch and the sherds are of a stylistically late organic fabric originally in the form of a long necked bag-shaped pot (Jacobs 2006). It is intriguing that Apple Down I and Weston Colley are both cemeteries that pre-date the seventh century. The careful reanalysis of other cemeteries, coupled with a programme of selective radiocarbon dating, might reveal the presence of late cremations in other long-lived sites. Overall, what is important here is that St Mary's was not the only community in seventh-century Hampshire for which a choice of burial was available.

The next topic to discuss is cemetery layout and organisation. At St Mary's two separate alignments are observed and across Hampshire a variety of orientations are also noted (Table 3.3). Grave direction may have been determined by several different factors such as local topographic features serving as boundary markers (Stoodley 2006, 67) and alignment on earlier monuments (Williams 1998). The important point in respect of this enquiry is that communities seem to have been able to decide on their own policies governing the laying out and use of burial grounds. Only in the classic final-phase cemeteries, such as Winnall II and Apple Down II, do we encounter anything that can be interpreted as a standard practice with rows of (roughly) aligned west-east graves (Figure 3.7). In some cases it may be that a tradition continues, for example at Portway, Andover: the majority of interments in the migration-period cemetery were south-north following a prehistoric ditch running down the east side of the cemetery that probably served as a boundary (Stoodley 2007). In its successor 800m to the west, the majority of burials also follow this direction. There is no obvious reason for this, although a possible boundary to the Portway land-unit that may have existed in the area could have been responsible (Stoodley 2006, 67). Local concerns and traditions were more important than general notions about how the body should be orientated.

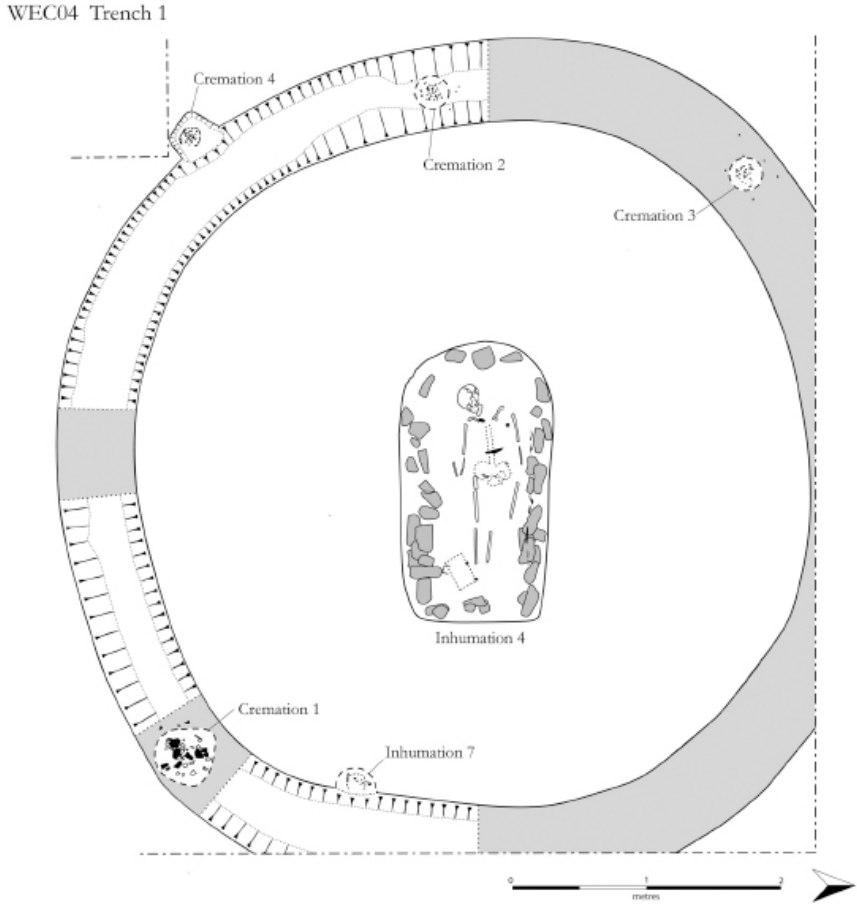

Figure 3.6: Weston Colley Grave 4 (drawn by Chris Fern).

Let us now consider some of the other aspects of the burial rite. St Mary's produced the aforementioned unusual double burial (G3520). It has already been stated that multiple burial during the fifth to seventh century is rare and the examples that we have consist mostly of contemporary interments. It was therefore intriguing that the majority of the cases from the Hampshire sample involved consecutive burials – a grave pit being used over a period of time for burial, often with the earlier interment(s) being badly disturbed during the event (Table 3.3). A particularly good example of the practice is Ports Down I (Corney *et al*. 1969) where five graves produced evidence of consecutive reuse, see especially grave 9 which contained the remains of three males: the bones of two had been pushed to the edges of the pit in order to accommodate the third interment. At Portway West, grave 3, is a genuine double burial of two (probable) adult males (Stoodley 2006, 67, fig. 3), but in accommodating these two, a primary individual, represented by fragments of clavicles and scapulae, was almost totally destroyed. Not only does this diversity conflict with what we understand to be typical of burial at this time, but it is also an action encountered in the later Saxon period. For example, at Bevis Grave, Bedhampton, a cemetery stretching from the

seventh to tenth century a mix of contemporary and consecutive multiple burials are found and two of the latter (graves 48 and 49) involved disturbance to earlier burials (Stoodley 2002b, 109, fig. 1).

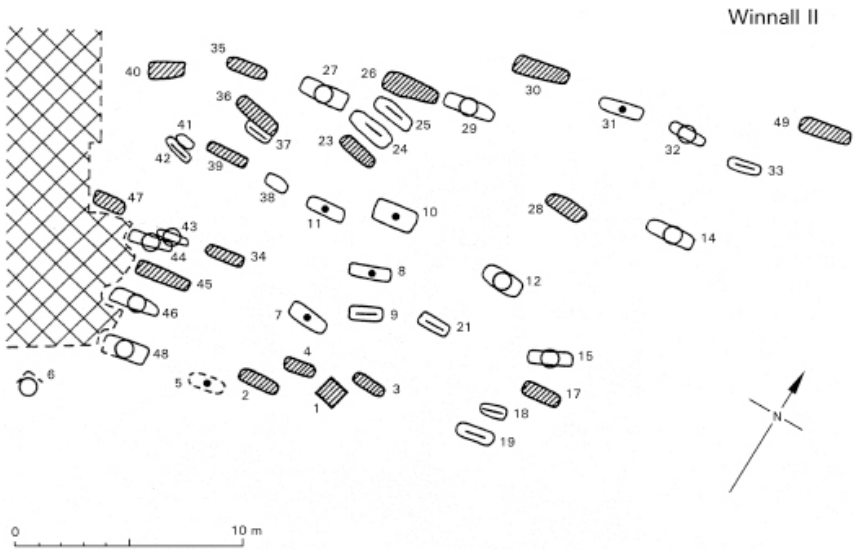

Figure 3.7: Plan of Winnall II. (Key:- Black: weapon burial; shaded: male without weapons; black circle: jewellery burial; open circle: female without jewellery; line: subadult; no symbol: unidentified; black dot: cremation).

Diversity can also be observed in attitudes to the laying out of the corpse and how it was treated. An example illustrating this is the aforementioned multiple burial from Portway West. Both the males were headless and they were also located a short distance away from another, possibly, headless male who had been interred in a barrow ditch on his side (grave 17) (Stoodley 2006, 67). Investigations at a multiperiod site at Portsdown (George Inn) recovered two inhumations close to a probable long barrow and Iron Age settlement (Bradley and Lewis 1968). Grave 1 is of a seventh- to eighth-century date, while grave 2 is unaccompanied, but the immature occupant appears to have been decapitated (Bradley and Lewis 1968, 41). Earlier discoveries in the area indicate that these interments might have belonged to a larger cemetery that was focussed on the barrow (Bradley and Lewis 1968, 28–30). With these examples we are once again reminded of behaviour more commonly encountered in the late Saxon period – but this time execution cemeteries. It is interesting that at Portway West the individuals may have been buried on the extremities of the cemetery and it can be suggested that they were being marked out, not only by mutilation to the body, but by the spatial location of the graves. Are we observing a strategy by local communities to deal with individuals who had transgressed? If so we might be evidencing an early stage in the development of execution burial. During the early Anglo-Saxon period deviant burials were interred within community cemeteries and a detailed spatial analysis of a number of sites has demonstrated that a conscious decision was made to locate these burials either on the edges of the cemeteries or on the periphery of household burial plots (Reynolds 2009). During the later sixth and seventh century isolated deviant burials start to

appear some of which are associated with prehistoric monuments (Reynolds 2009). The above cases from Portway West are therefore intriguing and potentially important especially within the context of the development of execution burial because they seem to represent a synthesis of traditions. On the one hand we have deviants being restricted to the periphery of a community cemetery, while on the other they demonstrate a deliberate association with an earlier monument. It can be argued that Portway presents a local response to the treatment of deviants, but one that was, in the context of seventh- and earlier eighth-century Hampshire, relatively sophisticated.

The final topic that needs to be tackled is perhaps the most complex – the grave goods. We have already noted the unusually wealthy character of several of the St Mary's weapon burials and in Hampshire few burials can compare in complexity to graves 5352 and 5537. There are several seventh-century burials that were well provided for in terms of weapons and other accompanying goods, for example, Alton grave 16 with its sword, shield and pair of spears but this is dated to the first half of the seventh century. In addition, no Hampshire cemeteries have so far produced weapon burials in such quantities. The Bargates cemetery does have an unusually high proportion of weapon burials although none of them are particularly outstanding and it appears to start earlier than St Mary's. In addition, the overall scarcity of barrow burials in Hampshire is interesting especially the lack of examples containing complex weapon assemblages. For example, the famous burial inserted into the earthwork at Oliver's Battery that produced the (Winchester) hanging bowl was only accompanied with a spear and seax (Andrews 1932).

The other side of the coin involves female burials and once again variation is the defining feature of this group. It is noted that women are in the minority in several burial grounds, such as Ports Down I, Snell's Corner (Knocker 1956) and Bargates (Stoodley 1999b) (Figure 3.8). This is a new type of cemetery and one that can be considered to have had strong masculine overtones. Moreover, the provision of female-linked grave goods differs locally. At one end of the scale, the women that do get into the 'masculine' type cemeteries tend not to have jewellery and dress accessories. For example at Bargates and Ports Down I no jewellery was recovered from the graves. At St Mary's in contrast to the weapon burials the investigation only produced four individuals with objects usually associated with females. The difference could however be chronological and the results of the project, *Anglo-Saxon England c.580–720: the Chronological Basis*, should help to clarify this. On the basis of albeit one cemetery, Winnall II, the opposite is true of cemeteries in which weapon burials are unknown or very scarce and where the more even proportion of sexes indicates a burial ground used by a community (Stoodley 1999b). Although it is not an exclusive pattern it seems like a division has taken place with separate locales being used for categories of burial that previously would have been accommodated within the same community ground.

Moreover, when the composition of the jewellery assemblages is studied it is noted that they are rather modest, consisting of a small number of pieces. St Mary's produced the two aforementioned gold pendants, but it is intriguing that these are not accompanied by other artefacts typical of final-phase female costume. Elsewhere in the region a similar finding is observed (Table 3.4) and it can be argued that the burials do not compare well to contemporary interments from other regions, for example at Harford Farm (Norfolk) grave 18 with amongst other artefacts a wooden vessel, gold and garnet pendant, shears and threadbox (Penn 2000, 18–19) and from Lechlade (Gloucestershire) grave 14 of the numerous grave goods we can highlight the pair of linked silver pins, wooden vessel, combs and necklace of beads and rings (Boyle *et al.* 1998, 58–9). Unlike these, the adult females

from Hampshire were not sent to their graves displaying the full ensemble of costume accessories and jewellery. Incidentally on close inspection some of the jewellery is old, worn or consisting of repaired pieces. For example, Winnall II grave 21 produced a broken garnet disc brooch, while the examination of the pendant from grave 5508 at St Mary's has revealed that it was made of garnets that were probably reused from another artefact.

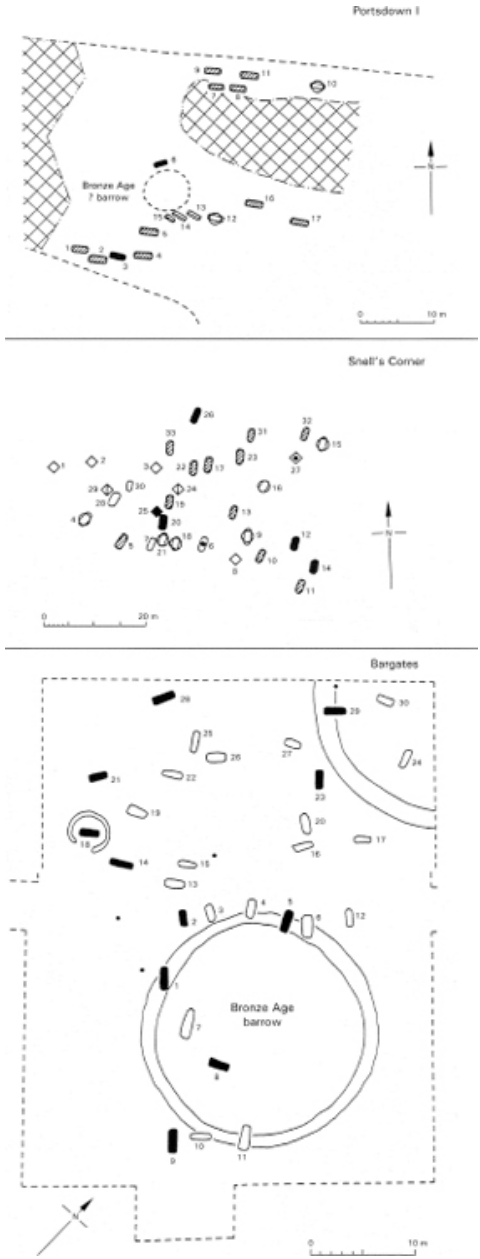

Figure 3.8: Plans of Ports Down I, Snell's Corner and Bargates. (Key:-Black: weapon burial; shaded: male without weapons; black circle: jewellery burial; open circle: female without jewellery; line: subadult; no symbol: unidentified; black dot: cremation).

Jewellery/associated dress items

Apple Down 1	48
Apple Down I	151
Portway West	6
Portway West	11
St Mary's	4077
St Mary's, 4202	2 × cattas, necklace inc pendant
St Mary's	5508
St Mary's	5510
Snell's Corner	6
Snell's Corner	28
Winnall, Hags	5
Winnall, Hecklet	7
Winnall, Hs	82 × penannular brooches
Winnall, Hs	10
Winnall, Hs	21

Table 3.4: Female assemblages from Hampshire cemeteries.

It is possible that this reflects changing attitudes to the deposition of jewellery and the interment now of 'second best' rather than the most treasured pieces in a burial context. Crawford (2004, 91) argues that damaged and repaired objects may not necessarily have had any less value, however; in fact their longevity may have bestowed a greater significance upon them. In a similar manner, artefacts that were mended or created by recycling parts of old objects, such as the aforementioned pendant from St Mary's, could perhaps be seen in the same light. Generally it is wealthier female interments that contain such objects, which Crawford (2004) interprets as the deliberate removal of wealth from circulation, all part of a long-standing practice of votive deposition – a method of conveying religious belief which continued into the seventh century. In seventh-century Hampshire, the deposition of jewellery does become increasingly selective, with certain items remaining in circulation for many years. And if Crawford is correct about the votive aspects of grave good deposition then this represents further evidence for diversity. The general rarity of the practice, however, indicates that it was only a minority of the Hampshire women who may have followed such traditional customs and by implication other ways of signalling religious devotion and adherence were perhaps taking hold.

Discussion and Conclusion

The overriding aim of this article has been to describe and explain how burial practice in seventh- and earlier eighth-century Hampshire was one of complexity. It has established that this existed at several different levels: the type of cemetery available for the disposal of the dead, the option of whether to cremate or inhume, the principles on which a cemetery was organised and certain specific aspects of the ritual. In addition, the evidence demonstrates that burial experiences a period of transition which encompasses much more than changes to the quantity and styles of the grave goods. Hampshire demonstrates a synthesis of traditions some that demonstrate the continuance of earlier traditions, while in others we seem to be observing the origins of practices that were to become typical of the late Saxon period. It is a dynamic scene with little overall standardization and is opposite to the traditional picture of burial outlined in the final-phase model. Yet by its very nature this complexity makes interpretation problematic. The fact that it is happening concomitantly on several different societal levels may help us to break it down and offer some tentative

explanations however.

For a start burial communities appear to have had a certain degree of control over how they organised their cemeteries and structured the burial practices that took place within them. This is similar to the early period and is seen by the continuance of practices such as the presence of both the rites of inhumation and cremation and the range of orientations. This might be interpreted as evidence for communities that were looking to the past and creating identities through retrospective behaviour. Yet, alongside this, and often within the same burial ground, practices appear that were rarely encountered before the seventh century and indicate a change in direction. For example, the increasing use that some communities made of multiple burial and in particular the reuse of earlier grave pits seems to mark a change in attitudes to the dead, perhaps new responses to how kin, or other, relationships were preserved, while the disturbance of earlier interments also demonstrates changing views on the sanctity of the dead. The presence of deviant burials and their deliberate restriction to the edge of a burial ground may reflect the development of legal concepts and methods of punishment by some local groups which was to find its ultimate expression in the execution cemeteries of the late Saxon period.

Close analysis of the type of female-linked assemblages reveals a fashion among women for costumes that did not require metal fasteners and other accessories and the apparent lack of a distinctive final-phase costume in Hampshire could be taken as evidence for the emergence of a regional identity centred on female costume, but one that is characterised by its modesty. The small number of women with final-phase dress accessories does seem to indicate that these influences were not being fully embraced in Hampshire. This has implications for any religious interpretations that are placed on the grave goods, especially as we heard earlier, the deposition of jewellery. Can we go a stage further and interpret it as a strategy by which the region signalled its difference to surrounding areas? Hampshire may have been making a deliberate attempt not to connect with the new styles current at this time and the classical associations that they encompass (Geake 1997, 129–136). If this is correct it has implications for the idea that there is a standard female burial costume throughout the country.

The existence of cemeteries of different statuses complicates matters. It is possible to identify three different types of cemetery each with their own distinctive features. Community cemeteries exhibiting a demographic profile made up of different age and gender groups, sites with a bias towards males, and burial grounds in which burial wealth indicates an elite. The community cemeteries are the easiest to deal with in the context of this article because they represent places where individual rural groups buried their dead. It represents a continuation of the field cemetery – a survival from the early period that would also continue into the later Saxon period (Hadley 2001, 36–8). The second type of site can be easily confused with the community cemetery except for the greater proportion of males and weapon burials which marks it out as a separate category. Examples of this type are strategically located, demonstrate a close relationship with harbours and waterways and consequently benefit from a high degree of intervisibility. The distinctive martial nature shared by these cemeteries and their locations in the landscape may suggest that they mark important boundaries and belong to an early stage in the formation of Hampshire. The county's creation can be reconstructed from documentary evidence and is a particularly complex process resulting from the amalgamation of several different groups by the West Saxon kings (Yorke 1989). This process must have been accompanied by a significant degree of political and militarily unrest. Is this the context for the complexity witnessed in the archaeological record? Furthermore, the decision to locate several of the cemeteries

around an ancient monument can be seen as a deliberate strategy by which the Saxon dead were portrayed as the rightful descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the land in order to legitimise claims to the territory by linking with a mythical past (Williams 1997, 26). Although women and children are not absent they are in a minority and are buried with less grave wealth. It is the males that benefit from above average wealth both in terms of grave goods and labour expended on the monument. The form of social organisation underlying the establishment and management of such places appears to be different: the emphasis is on commemorating the male and the masculine roles that were important within these contexts.

A similar type of cemetery in terms of its landscape context and high proportion of weapon burials is the St Mary's cemetery. It differs, however, by the greater quantity and quality of the grave goods deposited with several burials. Although wealthy pieces of jewellery were found, it is once again the weapon burials that draw attention to this site. Several burials were accompanied by complex and sophisticated weapon assemblages, which are of a different character altogether to the sets observed in the other Hampshire sites. In fact a good case can be made for its association with a high status settlement, such as a royal estate that was involved in controlling trade in the lower Itchen (Scull 2001, 72; Stoodley 2005, 190; Yorke 1982). In addition to portable wealth its location in a highly visible location by the waterfront must have been intentional to signal the authority of the group to traders and travellers visiting this part of Hampshire.

It is intriguing, however, that wealthy seventh-century barrow burials involving a single or small group of interments are largely absent from the county, especially south of Winchester. These monuments are usually interpreted as representing archaeologically the increasing stratification in society that accompanied the establishment of territory (Scull 1993) and their presence is to be expected in southern Hampshire. It is suggested that isolated barrow burials were not necessarily the only strategy employed in the expression of elite power. In certain locations where a clear sign of authority and power is required, such as at an important point of entry to a territory, alternative methods were chosen: the cemetery becoming intimately linked to the expression of elite power and authority. A similar situation has been suggested for the Avebury region by Sarah Semple (2003) where the spatial and chronological changes that take place have been associated with the development of elite power and the marking out of territory. But it might also find parallels in Scandinavia at places such as Kaupang and Birka and their cemeteries of closely packed mounds that were highly visible to visiting traders and other individuals.

Overall these burial grounds indicate the appearance during the seventh century of new social hierarchies and identities, and a range of different ways in which they were articulated. Is Hampshire unique in this respect? Were regionally distinct mortuary practices also developing in other areas? An obvious point of comparison that bears certain similarities but also some notable differences is Ipswich and its range of cemeteries (Scull 2002). Research may demonstrate that at the beginning of the later Saxon period England was considerably more diverse in terms of burial practice than previously believed. But in order to investigate this detailed analysis is required that considers not only the artefactual evidence but the other aspects of the rite, the organisation of the cemetery and mortuary landscapes.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their assistance during the preparation of this article: Annia Cherryson for making available the radiocarbon dates for several Hampshire burials;

Andrew Reynolds for sharing his corpus of deviant burials; Andy Russel for providing information about the Bitterne and Hawkeswood road burials and Wessex Archaeology, especially Roland Smith, Jackie McKinley and Lorraine Mepham for valuable information and discussions about the St Mary's Stadium excavations and Julie Gardiner for granting permission to reproduce several figures from the St Mary's monograph. Chris Fern is thanked for giving permission to use Fig. 3.6. Finally I am grateful to Annia Cherryson for her insightful comments on this paper and the anonymous referee's helpful and constructive suggestions and ideas.

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4. *'Such a resting-place as is necessary for us in God's sight and fitting in the eyes of the world'*: Saxon Southampton and the Development of Churchyard Burial

Annia Kristina Cherryson

The late Saxon bequest of an estate by Ordnoth and his wife to the Old Minster, Winchester requests that 'on the day of our death they (members of the monastic community) will fetch us with the minster's resources and provide for us such a resting-place as is necessary for us in God's sight and fitting in the eyes of the world' (Whitelock 1930, 19). By the end of the Saxon period, a suitable resting place was perceived to be in consecrated ground either within or adjacent to a church. Few, if any, chose to be interred away from sacred ground and the prospect of the Church's intercession on behalf of their souls. Just as five hundred years earlier in the sixth century, burial as either inhumations or cremations, usually with grave goods, in a field cemetery was an appropriate final resting place. This change from field cemetery to churchyard was a fundamental shift in burial location – one which continues to affect where the dead are interred over 1000 years later and in many ways represents the Church's greatest impact on funerary behaviour during the Anglo-Saxon period. Traditionally, the transition to churchyard burial was thought to have been relatively rapid, occurring over a few generations in the seventh and eighth centuries (Meaney and Hawkes 1970, 51). The validity of this assumption is now increasingly questioned, with recent work suggesting that the transition to churchyard burial was far more complex and protracted than traditionally envisioned (Hadley 2000a, 160; 2000b, 199; 2007; Blair 2005, 245). This paper uses the evidence from early medieval Southampton in Hampshire as a case study to examine the rate at which churchyard burial was adopted and the variation in burial location during the later Anglo-Saxon period.

The origins and development of churchyard burial in the Southampton area

Documentary sources indicate that the first churches appeared in what would become the late Saxon shire of Hampshire during the seventh century. Churches known to have been founded near Southampton included the Old Minster within Winchester's Roman walls some 15 miles away while the abbot of a monastery at Redbridge, approximately 3.5 miles away, interceded in the fate of the last two princes of the Isle of Wight's royal house in AD 686 (ASC F 648 – Swanton 2000, 28; HE III:7 – Sherley-Price 1990, 154; HE IV:16 – Sherley-Price 1990, 231; Hase 1988, 45). These early churches presumably had some form of associated churchyard, probably catering for members of the ecclesiastical community and perhaps a few members of the laity. The conversion process was known to have initially targeted royalty and the nobility (Morris 1989, 91) and it seems probable that at least a few of the newly converted elite may have been interred adjacent to churches.

According to the twelfth-century *Annales monasterii de Wintonia*, the seventh-century West Saxon kings Cenwalh, Aescwine and Centwine were interred at the Old Minster in Winchester (Deliyannis 1995, 119). However there is no evidence that the seventh-century Church demanded that the newly converted were interred in churchyards (Geake 1992, 89; Blair 2005, 229). Indeed, there is no evidence to suggest that the early Church was overly concerned where the dead were buried (Bullough 1983, 186). Moreover in the first century of its existence, the Anglo-Saxon church was not in a position to enforce a shift in burial location (Morris 1983, 54). Archaeologically, the evidence for seventh-century churchyard burial in Hampshire is sparse. Burials dating to the late seventh century have been excavated from the churchyard of the Old Minster in Winchester (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 222) and it is possible that some of the churchyard burials at SOU13 in Southampton date to the seventh century (see below). Yet while there is paucity of examples of churchyard burial, there is substantial archaeological evidence for burial in Hampshire during this period, in non-churchyard cemeteries such as Winnall II, Ports Down, Snell's Corner, Bevis Grave, and Portway West (Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Corney 1967; Knocker 1955; Rudkin 2001; Stoodley 2006). The archaeological data suggests that lay interment in churchyards was very much a minority rite in seventh- and early eighth-century Hampshire, probably limited to those with close connections to ecclesiastical establishments such as patrons and possibly tenants (Blair 2005, 241). The Church had provided a new alternative location for the population of Hampshire to inter their dead (Hadley 2000a, 160), but at least in the seventh and early-eighth centuries, it was one with a limited appeal. Traditional burial locations, containing the remains of ancestors were not easily discarded for Christian burial in the vicinity of a church (Blair 2005, 58).

So if there was no immediate transition to churchyard burial, how rapidly was churchyard burial adopted by the wider community? Traditional models have viewed the nonchurchyard cemeteries of the late seventh and early eighth century as representing the final flourish of pagan burial prior to the rapid adoption of churchyard burial (Meaney and Hawkes 1970, 50–51). The archaeological evidence could be perceived as supporting this hypothesis as the vast majority of early medieval burials known to post-date *c*.AD 800 in Hampshire and Wessex are associated with ecclesiastical buildings (Cherryson 2005, 222–4). Yet this does not necessarily mean that there was a rapid transition to churchyard burial during the eighth century. Most late Saxon churchyards are dated using either radiocarbon dating or stratigraphy, methods which tend to provide a relatively wide chronological range. Moreover, stratigraphic dating usually provides a general date range for the entire cemetery, while cost means only a few burials are radiocarbon dated. Thus, while the period of use of a churchyard can be determined, detecting changes in the level of use is problematic, making it difficult to determine whether churchyard burial was rapidly adopted by the laity in the eighth century or only became commonplace in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Another way to examine the rate of adoption of churchyard burial is to consider the increasing evidence for the persistence of non-churchyard burial into the late Saxon period, which suggests a slower transition to universal inhumation adjacent to or within a church than traditionally envisioned (Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 127; Hadley 2000a, 160; 2000b, 199; 2007; Blair 2005, 245). In some cases the burials lie in cemeteries that were founded in the seventh century and continued in use into the ninth and tenth centuries, such as Bevis Grave in Hampshire (Rudkin 2001; Cherryson 2005, 228). While other cemeteries, such as the tenth- and eleventh-century cemetery at Chimney and the ninth-century cemetery at Yarnton, both in Oxfordshire, were founded away from any known church, centuries after the introduction of Christianity (Crawford 1989, 54; Hey 2004, 75). The incidence of such

burial grounds may be much higher, as demonstrating the presence or absence of associated religious buildings is not always simple if only the part of the sites has been excavated and the timber churches of the middle Saxon period do not leave substantive evidence (Buckberry this volume). Nor were all the non-churchyard burials interred in cemeteries, with increasing numbers of single inhumations or small groups of burials dating to the late Saxon period being identified (Cherryson 2005; Cherryson 2008; Buckberry this volume). Examples in the Wessex area include the two late ninth- or tenth-century burials found at the Brooks in Winchester (Scobie *et al*. 1991, 37) and the three eighth- or ninth-century burials from Shepton Mallet in Somerset (Leach 2001, 31). This evidence for the persistence of non-churchyard burial argues against a rapid adoption of churchyard burial and points to greater diversity in burial location during the later Saxon period, although it should be noted that separation in distance from ecclesiastical buildings does not necessarily equate with freedom from church control. It could be argued that examples of the later Saxon non-churchyard burial are the exceptions that prove the rule. This could be true but such burials are likely to be under-represented in the archaeological record. Recent surveys of Sites and Monuments Records in Wessex (Cherryson 2005) and in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire (Buckberry 2004 and this volume) identified large numbers of undated unaccompanied burials, many not associated with any ecclesiastical structures, some of which are likely to date to the later Saxon period. In addition, poorly furnished field cemeteries with predominately extended west-east burials have tended to be dated to the seventh and early eighth centuries, either on the basis of datable grave goods or, if the grave goods cannot be closely dated, assumed to be of that date. In many cases such assumptions are valid but, as the later field cemetery at Chimney demonstrates, this is not always the case. Moreover, even if some of the burials in a cemetery date to the seventh and early eighth century, do all the burials? Sites like Bevis Grave raise the possibility that other seventh- and eighth-century cemeteries, such as Winnall II, may contain later burials that can only be identified using radiocarbon dating. Further investigation of the continued use of these seventh-century cemeteries, many of which are only partially excavated, is of particular relevance to the understanding of the development of churchyard burial.

One way of illustrating the diversity of burial location and the evolution of churchyard burial during the later Saxon period is by the use of a case study. The city of Southampton lies at the junction of the Rivers Test and Itchen at the top of Southampton Water in Southern Hampshire and contains the sites of the middle Saxon emporium of Hamwic, the Roman settlement of Clausentum and the later Saxon town (Figure 4.1). There has been much debate about the extent to which middle Saxon emporia should be considered urban or whether they were simply some form of proto-urban settlement or urban precursor (Biddle 1976, 114–6; Scull 1997; Morton 1999). Yet whether urban or not, Hamwic represents a settlement of greater size, complexity and, to a degree, density than had been seen in Wessex since the Roman period, offering a different physical and social context for burial. The modern city has been subject to large-scale excavations due to postwar development, which has produced substantial settlement and burial evidence of early medieval date (Holdsworth 1980; Morton 1992a; Andrews 1997; Garner 1993; 2001; Garner and Vincent 1997; Birbeck 2005). Not only are there multiple cemeteries, but there is a complete sequence of burials between the late seventh and eleventh centuries, although it should be noted that some centuries are better represented than others. Burials of the late eighth and ninth century are central to understanding the evolution of churchyard burial, yet interments of this period tend to be under-represented within the archaeological record in Wessex (Cherryson 2005). The Southampton area is blessed with a wealth of cemeteries of

mid to late Saxon date, making it a particularly useful case study of the transition to churchyard burial in the emerging non-rural settlements of the later Saxon period.

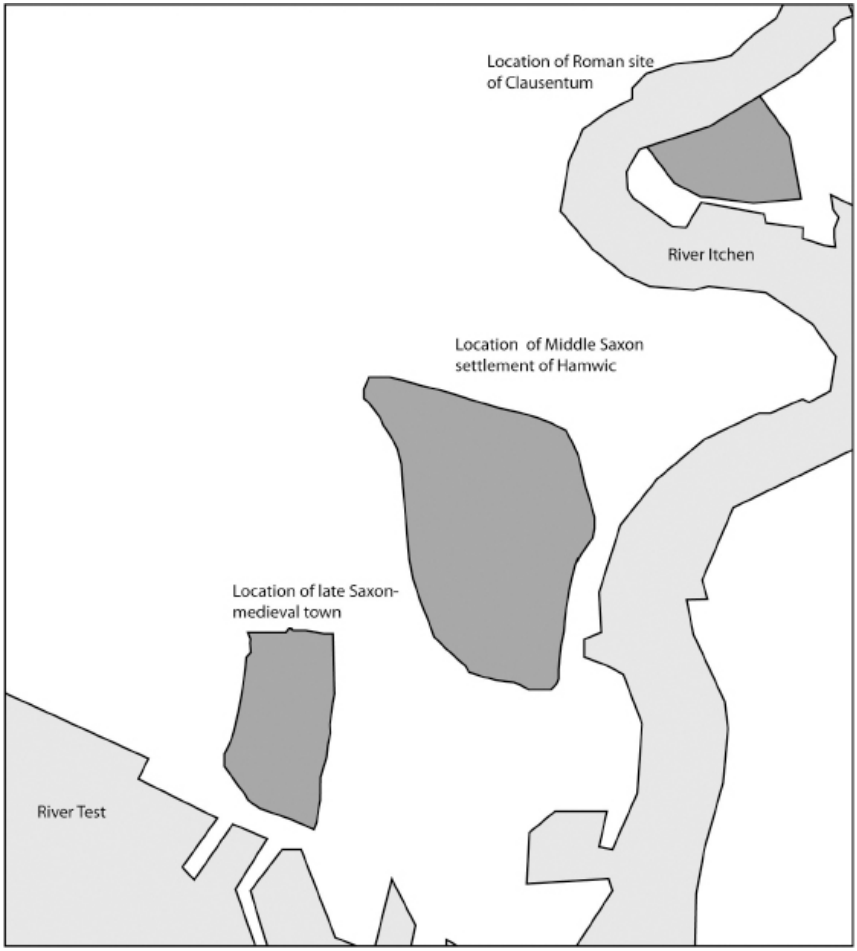

Figure 4.1: Map of the Southampton area showing the location of Roman, middle Saxon and late Saxon settlements (adapted from Birbeck 2005, 2).

Burial in late seventh- and early eighth-century Southampton

There is little evidence for early medieval burial in the Southampton area prior to the appearance of a number of late-seventh century and early-eighth century cemeteries. These cemeteries are discussed in detail elsewhere in this volume by Nick Stoodley and therefore only an abbreviated summary is included below and in Table 4.1, to provide sufficient information to understand later developments. Southampton's late seventh- to early eighth-century cemeteries occur in two distinct clusters; one within the site of the middle Saxon emporium of Hamwic and the other lying approximately a mile to the north on the other side of the River Itchen in the vicinity of the Roman settlement of Clausentum. At least

three distinct cemeteries were founded in Hamwic just prior to its foundation or during the early phases of the settlement's existence. The earliest of these is the larger of the two cemeteries uncovered during the excavations at St. Mary's Stadium in the north east of the settlement, which has been dated to *c*.AD 650–720 (Birbeck 2005; Stoodley this volume) (Figure 4.2; Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Two furnished burials recovered from the adjacent site of SOU 20 in 1975 are considered to be part of the same cemetery, giving a total of 26 inhumations and 18 cremations (Holdsworth 1980; Birbeck 2005, 11). Some 300 metres to the north-west of the St. Mary's Stadium cemetery lies the small burial ground at SOU 32 (Figure 4.2; Table 4.1). An early eighth-century sceatta found in the fill of one of the ten graves and a radiocarbon date from one of the burials suggests a late seventh- or early eighth-century date for the cemetery (Morton 1992a, 179) (Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Five hundred metres to the south of SOU 32 lies another cemetery of similar date and with analogous features. The Cook Street cemetery (SOU 254, 567 and 823) consists of twenty-one burials as well as disarticulated human remains (Figure 4.2, Table 4.1) (Garner 1993 and 2001; Garner and Vincent 1997). Eighteen burials lie to the east of a ditch, which appears to demark the boundary of either the cemetery or the settlement of Hamwic (Garner 2001, 188). Grave goods in the form of a knife and linked pins of silver and bronze were found with only one burial (Garner 1993, 86). A radiocarbon date from one of the burials within a penannular ditch suggests that the main part of the cemetery was in use during the late seventh or early eighth century (Garner 2001, 177) (Table 4.2). The subject of the burials within the boundary ditch will be considered later.

The second group of late seventh- and early eighth-century cemeteries in the Southampton area lie approximately a mile to the north of the area of the Hamwic settlement, in the vicinity of the Roman settlement of Clausentum (Figure 4.1). Large quantities of human bone have been uncovered in this area over the last two centuries with burials from three sites known to date to the late seventh or eighth century (Figure 4.3). The largest of these sites, SOU 862, contained the remains of at least fifteen individuals (Southern Archaeological Services 1998). The burials were unfurnished and, with the exception of a single southwest-northeast grave, all orientated approximately west-east (Table 4.1) (Southern Archaeological Services 1998, 25, 30). Radiocarbon dates from three of the skeletons produced a rather wide date range (Table 4.2), but a date of seventh through to eighth century seems likely with a possibility that the cemetery continued into the ninth or tenth century. The other two sites, SOU 207 and SOU 414, lie some 500m to the south-west of SOU 862. The remains of six individuals were excavated at SOU 414 (Table 4.1) (Smith 1991 15, 20). The burials were supine and orientated west-east. All the graves were unfurnished with one exception, which contained a spearhead. Radiocarbon dating suggests a late seventh- or eighth-century date for these burials (Table 4.2). At least nine unfurnished inhumations were recovered from the site of SOU 207, which lies some 100m west-south-west of SOU 414 (Table 4.1) (Southampton City Museum SOU 207 archive). Radiocarbon dating of one of the burial suggests a late seventh- or early eighth-century date (Table 4.2). The proximity of the burials from SOU 414 and SOU 207 suggest they may well form part of the same cemetery, particularly as undated human remains have been found between the two sites (Englefield 1841, 69). While it is possible that the burials from SOU 862 may also be part of the same cemetery it seems unlikely as these burials lie on the other side of Clausentum's inner fosse and excavations between the two areas have not yielded any human remains (Alan Morton *pers. comm*).

Cemetery	Date	Basis of dating	Number of inhumations	Number of burials with				References
				Grave goods	Coffins/ wooden linings	Evidence for above ground markers	Penannular ditches	
St. Mary's Stadium and SOU 20	c.AD 650–720	C14 grave goods	26 +18 cremations	20 inhumations, 2 of cremations	4	2	0	Birbeck 2005; Holdsworth 1980
SOU 32	Late 7–early 8C	C14 sceatta	10 + 6 grave-like features	1	4	2	1	Morton 1992a and b
Cook Street (SOU 254, 567 and 823)	Late 7–early 8C	C14	18 + 3 north south burials in ditch	1	4	0	3	Garner 1993 and 2001; Garner and Vincent 1997
SOU 862	Late 7–early 8C	C14	15+	0	0	0	0	Southern Archaeological Services 1998
SOU 414	Late 7–early 8C	C14	6	1	0	0	0	Smith 1991
SOU 207	Late 7–early 8C	C14	9	0	0	0	0	SCM Archive 207

Table 4.1: Summary of funerary provision in the late seventh- and early eight-century cemeteries in the Southampton area.

Site Name	SOU Number	Grave Number	Laboratory Number Reference	Uncalibrated date	Calibrated age ranges		Reference
					68.2% probability	95.4% probability	
St Mary's Stadium cemetery I	-	7138	GU-9322	1245±40 BP	690–860AD	680–890AD	Birbeck 2005
		7138	GrA-18295	1510±45 BP	440–620AD	430–640AD	
		5106	GU-9324	1350±40 BP	640–770AD	610–780AD	
		5114	GU-9323	1420±45 BP	600–665AD	540–690AD	
		5134	GrA-18294	1540±45 BP	430–600AD	420–620AD	
Cook Street	SOU 254, 567 and 823	5663	AA-35544	980±55 BP	990–1160AD	970–1210AD	Garner 1993; 2001; Garner and Vincent 1997
		201	AA-40364	1250±45 BP	680–850AD	680–890AD	
		5690	AA-35543	1330±45 BP	650–770AD	620–780AD	
Clifford Street	SOU 32	428	Wk-14450	132639 BP	650–770 AD	640–780 AD	Cherryson 2005
-	SOU 862	Context 22	GU-7595	1160±70	770–980AD	690–1020AD	A. Morton *pers. comm.*
		Context 20	GU-7594	1405±45 BP	600–665AD	540–700AD	
Bitterne Road	SOU 414	Context 546	OxA-12078	1336±22 BP	660–690AD	650–770AD	Southampton City Museum Archive SOU 414; Cherryson 2005
			RCD-3357	1255±75 BP	680–870AD	650–970AD	
-	SOU 207	N/A	OxA-12077	1267±22 BP	690–780AD	675–805AD	Southampton City Museum Archive SOU 207; Cherryson 2005
St Mary's Church	SOU 630	106	OxA-5447	1065±45 BP	900–1020AD	880–1040AD	Smith 1995
		113	OxA-5548	1215±45 BP	720–890AD	680–950AD	
	SOU 184	-	OxA-12075	965±22 BP	1020–1155AD	1015–1160AD	Cherryson 2005
	SOU 753	-	OxA-7187	885±60 BP	1040–1220AD	1020–1260AD	Garner 2004a, 5
Marine Parade	SOU 13	31	OxA-12041	1260±26 BP	690–780AD	675–865AD	Cherryson 2005
		40	OxA-12042	1475±26 BP	560–640AD	540–645AD	
		59	OxA-12043	1239±26 BP	690–860AD	685–885AD	
		64	OxA-12044	1290±25 BP	685–770AD	665–780AD	
St Mary's Stadium cemetery II	-	7380	NZA-14941	1245±70 BP	680–880AD	650–950AD	Birbeck 2005
Six Dials	SOU 31/258	6004	Wk-14449	1410±49 BP	600–665 AD	550–690 AD	Cherryson 2005
Upper Bugle Street	SOU 124		OxA-12076	1169±22 BP	780–940AD	775–960AD	Cherryson 2005
Westgate	SOU 25	3558	OxA-12115	1075±24 BP	900–1000AD	895–1020AD	Cherryson 2005
		3425	OxA-12195	1066±32 BP	900–1020AD	895–1025AD	
Lower High Street	SOU 161	31	OxA-5941	1135±26 BP	780–990AD	770–1020AD	Andy Russel *pers. comm.*

Table 4.2: Radiocarbon dates obtained from burials in Hamwic or late Saxon Southampton (all dates calibrated using OxCal v. 3.9).

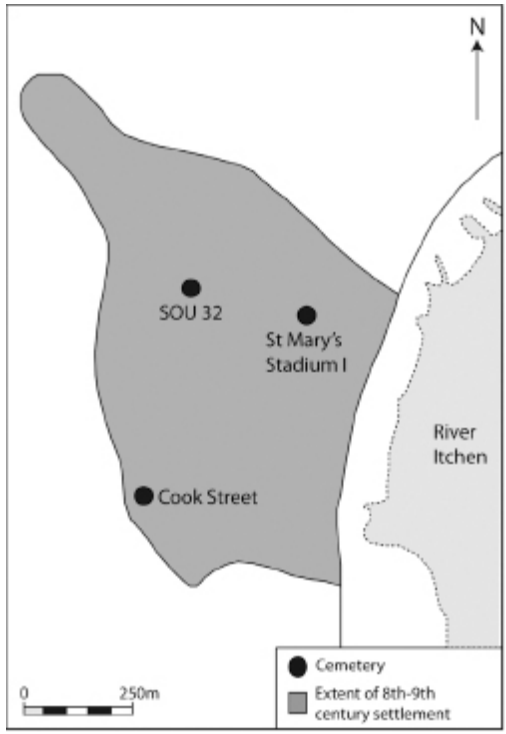

Figure 4.2: Plan of Hamwic showing the location of the securely dated late seventh- to early eighth-century cemeteries (adapted from Birbeck 2005, 196).

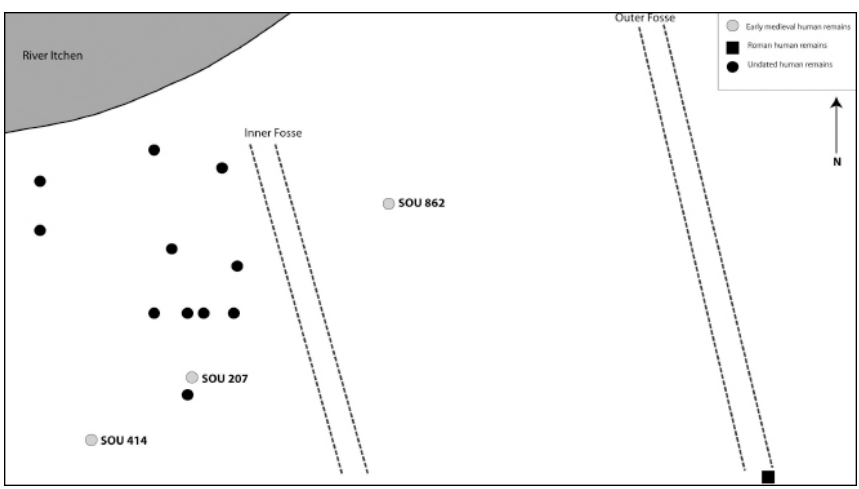

Figure 4.3: Location plan of the cemeteries and finds of human bone around the defences of the Roman settlement at Clausentum (adapted from Southern Archaeological Services 1998).

Figure 4.4: Plan of Hamwic showing the location of the post mid-eighth-century cemeteries (adapted from Birbeck 2005, 196).

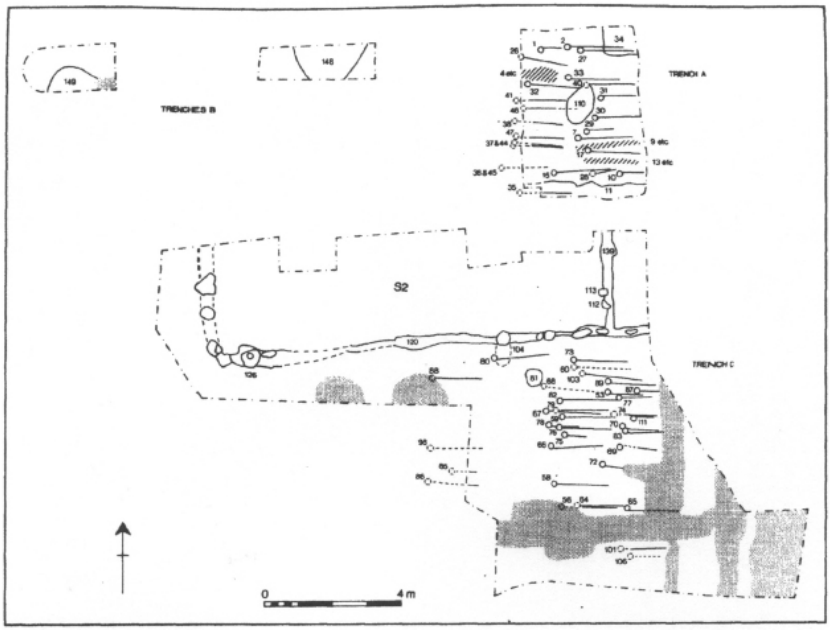

Figure 4.5: Plan of the eighth- and ninth-century cemetery at SOU 13, Southampton (permission of Southampton City Council Arts and Heritage).

Churchyard burial in Hamwic

The church offered an alternative location for burial from the seventh century onwards and Hamwic contains one of the earliest excavated churchyards in the Wessex region. Excavations at SOU 13 in 1973 uncovered the remains of at least 81 burials, laying either side of a trench and post-hole structure (Figures 4.4 and 4.5) (Morton 1992a, 121–2). The structure was approximately 4.2 meters wide and at least 12.94 metres long with the spacing of the post holes suggesting a door was present in the south wall (Morton 1992a, 122). A fragment of window glass recovered during the excavations indicates the building was at least partly glazed (Morton 1992a, 124). Burials, orientated west-east and organised in rows set approximately at right angles to the structure, were recovered from either side of the building, with at least 45 individuals to the north and a minimum of 36 to the south (Morton 1992a, 123, 134). The association between the burials and the structure suggests that the building is likely to have been a double-celled church, which usually date to the eighth century or later (Morton 1992a, 123, 136). Grave goods were only found with two burials, one accompanied by a knife and the other an iron object, although the two knives, three pin shafts, three possible tags and an copperalloy object, possibly part of a chatelaine, recovered from the site may have initially been deposited in graves (Morton 1992a, 133–4). Wood stains, indicative of the use of a coffin or wooden grave linings, were found in only one grave. There was no other evidence for the use of grave structures or above ground markers observed in the cemetery. Radiocarbon dating suggests that the burial ground was likely to have been in use between the late seventh and ninth centuries, most probably during the eighth and ninth century (Table 4.2). One of the burials radiocarbon dated was from one of the earlier levels in one of the trenches. It produced a mid-sixth to mid-seventh century date,

raising the possibility that the cemetery had its origins in a small seventh-century field churchyard. While not common, the construction of ecclesiastical buildings over or near earlier graves of seventh-century date has been noted elsewhere (Blair 2005, 237).

The SOU 13 cemetery exhibited many features characteristic of churchyards of the late Saxon and medieval period with a higher density of burials, considerable post-burial disturbance and greater levels of intercutting of graves than has been seen in other contemporary cemeteries (Scull 2001, 71). The rows of burials within the cemetery were reworked five times with approximately a third of all skeletons being redeposited (Morton 1992b, 72). There is evidence for post-burial disturbance of the dead in Wessex throughout the early medieval period, but it is much more pronounced in the churchyard cemeteries of the late Saxon period (Cherryson 2007, 136). The late Saxon period saw the increasing enclosure of churchyards, separating the sacred from secular, and establishing them as distinct places within the landscape, contained within boundaries (Thompson 2002, 232). Enclosing churchyards restricted the space available for burial resulting in higher level of intercutting and post-burial disturbance (Cherryson 2007, 137). Yet the churchyard at SOU 13 is not late Saxon, but middle Saxon, so why does this much earlier burial ground exhibit levels of post-burial disturbance characteristic of later cemeteries? The activities of the Church were not the only factor that affected the levels of post-burial disturbance. Middle Saxon emporium possessed larger populations and greater limitations on the space available for burial than contemporary rural settlements. SOU 13, one of the earliest examples of a cemetery with high levels of post-burial disturbance in Wessex, lies within one of the earliest non-rural settlements in the West Saxon Kingdom. The cemetery at SOU 13 was in use after the major expansion of the settlement of Hamwic in the mid-eighth century (Morton 1992a, 54). With this expansion came increased pressure on space within the settlement, placing the living and dead in direct competition for land – and the living were always going to have the upper hand. The resulting pressure on space meant that the cemetery at SOU 13 rapidly exceeded its capacity (Morton 1992b, 75), leading to high levels of postburial disturbance as existing rows of burials were reworked to make space for later burials (Morton 1992b, 74). Thus, SOU 13 exhibits features more synonymous with later churchyards because the space for burial was restricted in early non-rural settlements due to competition over land much earlier than seen elsewhere (Cherryson 2007, 138).

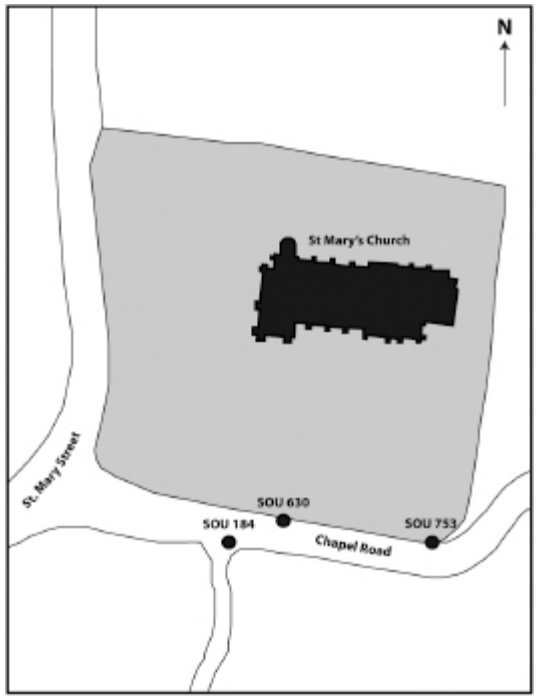

Figure 4.6: Location of early medieval burials in relation to the modern church and churchyard (adapted from Garner 2004a).

St Mary's Church has been long considered to be Southampton's mother church (Figure 4.4) (Hase 1994, 45). It was known to be the mother church for the entire lower part of the Itchen Valley during the eleventh and twelfth centuries and was the main church for the later medieval town, despite lying outside the city walls. Indeed, the fact that the church lies within the site of middle Saxon Hamwic rather than being in the medieval town seemed suggestive of a middle Saxon origin, but until recently there was little archaeological evidence to support this supposition. A series 49 sceatta was found in the churchyard in the first half of the nineteenth century (Addyman and Hill 1969, 67) and a lead cross of early medieval date was found accompanying a burial in 1884 (Morton 1992a, 50). Fortunately, the last decade has seen a number of skeletons excavated within and immediately adjacent to St Mary's churchyard mainly as small scale excavations prior to repairing the churchyard wall, installing parking meters or laying pipes or cables (Figure 4.6) (Smith 1995; 1996; Garner 1998, 2004a and b). Several of the burials recovered have been radiocarbon dated to the early medieval period (Table 4.2), providing more substantive evidence that St Mary's was in use as a burial ground during the early medieval period (Smith 1995, 259). The earliest radiocarbon dates from one of these burials gave a range of AD 680–950 at a 2σ level of confidence, suggesting that the churchyard was in use by at least the ninth century and possibly earlier (Smith 1995, 258). All of the burials that were radiocarbon dated lie on the periphery of the current churchyard, and, assuming that burial commenced closer to the church, it is possible that the core of the burial ground is considerably earlier, possibly of seventh- or eighth-century date (Smith 1995, 259). With only a few fragmented skeletons

recovered from the edge of the churchyard, it is virtually impossible to determine anything of the funerary practices being used except that the burials are supine and orientated west-east.

The late seventh and early eighth centuries saw the establishment of a network of minister churches in the Wessex heartlands (Blair 1994, 56). Consequently it is not surprising that there should have been a church within the Hamwic settlement. Yet the settlement was home to two churches, lying some 200m apart – so what was the relationship between the two churches? The radiocarbon dating evidence indicates that the churchyard in SOU 13 was in use during the eighth and ninth centuries, while burial was occurring around St Mary's Church by at least the ninth century, and possibly as early as the seventh or eighth century. The evidence currently available makes it impossible to determine which of the two churches is earlier. St Mary's Church held a monopoly over burial rights in the city during the medieval period and also served as a mother church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Hase 1994, 45). Thus it could be argued that St Mary's Church was a minster during the middle Saxon period. This in turn may indicate an early foundation date, predating the church at SOU 13. While it is possible that the two churches were used successively, it seems highly probable that burial was occurring concurrently in both churchyards for at least part of the eighth and ninth centuries.

The Hamwic area is thought to have been the location of Hamtun (Yorke 1995, 306). The suffix 'tun' has multiple meanings but in many early place names it often seems to denote a royal residence or centre of authority (Yorke 1982, 80). Hamtun was also called a *villa regalis* in a charter dated to the ninth century issued by King Aethelwulf while in residence there (Yorke 1982, 80; Yorke 1995, 307). While the presence of the earlier of the two cemeteries from St Mary's Stadium does not necessarily prove the existence of a royal centre in Hamwic, it does indicate the presence of a distinct and elite group in the vicinity (Stoodley 2005, 81). In addition, the concentration of imported pottery in one part of Hamwic has led to suggestions of a possible foreign enclave (Timby 1988, 117). Given the possibility of distinctive communities within the settlement, it is possible that the two churchyards in Hamwic represented two discrete ecclesiastical foci, perhaps serving different communities.

Minsters of the eighth and ninth century were not compact enclosed units, but rather were composed of dispersed elements including multiple churches, chapels, holy wells and cemeteries (Blair 1992, 239, 257; 2005, 199). Thus, St Mary's Church and the church at SOU 13 may well have been components of a single ecclesiastical complex. Two churches are known to have lain at the core of most minster complexes and perhaps this was the case in Hamwic (Blair 2005, 199). Yet usually these multiple central churches were aligned approximately linearly along a west-east axis (Blair 2005, 199; Blair 1992, 249–50), as at Hexham (Bailey 1991) and Jarrow (Cramp 2005), although there are a few examples where the buildings lie with their long sides parallel to each other aligned north-south, as suggested at Nazeingbury in Essex (Huggins 1978). The Hamwic churches are not arranged in anything approaching a straight line and in addition they lie some 200m apart. While irregularities in the layout of multiple churches are not unknown – for example at Bywell, Carlisle and Coldringham (Blair 1992, 250) – they are unusual. Moreover, the 200m distance between the two churches is much larger than usually seen between groups of central churches, thus reducing the likelihood that both churches were part of the central core of an ecclesiastical complex. Some minster complexes are known to have possessed subsidiary chapels and oratories, which lay away from the central churches. In some cases, these structures may have had associated burial grounds. For example, the nun's cemetery

at Barking was associated with an oratory which lay in the southern part of the monastic precinct (HE IV:7 – Sherley-Price 1990, 217). As such, it may be that the timber church structure found at SOU 13 was a mortuary chapel or a small outlying church linked to the minster complex. Excavations at Whithorn have uncovered two distinct religious foci, one a church at the core of the ecclesiastical complex and the second consisting of a church and mortuary chapel on the periphery of the monastic precinct (Blair 2005, 202; Hill 1997, 31). It has been suggested that there may have been a degree of zoning within the precinct, with restricted access to the central monastic core with many confined to the periphery (Blair 2005, 202; Hill 1997, 41). While the minsters of the West Saxon kingdom are unlikely to be subject to the same influences as those in Northumbria, perhaps the underlying principle can be applied to the Hamwic data. Burial adjacent to St Mary's Church may initially have been restricted to certain elements of the Hamwic community, possibly members of the ecclesiastical community and selected members of the laity, with all others desiring a burial *ad sanctos* being interred at the churchyard at SOU 13.

Figure 4.7: Burials from the Six Dials Cemetery cut through the surface of an earlier road (permission of Southampton City Council Arts and Heritage).

The churchyard at SOU 13 appears to have gone out of use prior to the decline in the population in Hamwic, with pits cut into layers above the burials indicating a change in the function of the site (Morton 1992a, 136, 138). The abandonment of one or more of the multiple burial foci associated with minster complexes of middle Saxon origin is known from elsewhere with changes in population and parish size being among the contributory factors (Hadley 2007, 195–7). The abandonment of the churchyard at SOU 13 pre-dates the decline of the settlement and it seems unlikely to be the result of population change. Instead the end of interment at SOU 13 may be linked to burial in the churchyard around St Mary's Church becoming more inclusive. As greater numbers were allowed to be interred adjacent to the church at the heart of Hamwic's ecclesiastical core, burial by the subsidiary chapel at SOU 13 became less desirable and thus this second churchyard was no longer necessary.

Non-churchyard burial in Hamwic

The two churchyards were not the only cemeteries in Hamwic in use during the eighth and ninth centuries. Although their use may have overlapped with the churchyards for a short time, the late seventh- and early eighth-century cemeteries at Cook Street, St Mary's Stadium and SOU 32 were probably abandoned and subsumed when the settlement expanded in the mid-eighth century (Scull 2001, 74; Birbeck 2005, 77). However, there are at least two cemeteries, which appear to post-date the mid-eighth century, both without any apparent evidence for associated ecclesiastical structures. The earliest of these is the later of the two cemeteries uncovered during the excavations at St Mary's Stadium (Birbeck 2005, 107). The cemetery, referred to as St Mary's Stadium cemetery II in this paper, contained eight unfurnished inhumations, orientated approximately west-east with their heads to the west (Figure 4.4). All the burials were supine with extended or slightly flexed legs. There was no evidence for the use of grave structures or above-ground markers, although the base of one grave was lined with a three-centimetre layer of gravel. A radiocarbon date from one of the graves seems to indicate a later eighth-century date for the cemetery (Table 4.2). It has been suggested that the cemetery may have been a small family burial ground (Birbeck 2005, 107).

The second Hamwic cemetery, post-dating the mid-eighth century, was uncovered during excavations at Six Dials (Figures 4.4 and 4.7) (Andrews 1997, 198). The cemetery consisted of a total of eleven articulated burials and three groups of disarticulated bone representing at least 19 individuals. No evidence for the use of grave goods, above-ground markers or any form of grave furniture was observed, although iron nails recovered from the area around the graves are possibly indicative of the use of coffins (Andrews 1997, 203). The graves were all oriented approximately west-east and, where it could be observed, all the burials were supine and extended, with the exception of one burial where the legs were flexed. A number of the burials were cut into large deposits of slag and charcoal, containing pottery dated to *c*.AD 750–850, while others had sunk into rubbish pits thought to have been in use between *c*.AD 750–850, suggesting little time had elapsed between the filling of the pits and the deposition of the burials. Two burials from the cemetery were cut into one of the last extant surfaces of one of Hamwic's roads (Figure 4.7) (Andrews 1997, 202). Overall, the stratigraphic evidence suggests a late ninth century date for the burials. However, a recent radiocarbon analysis of one of the burials has produced a date of AD 550–690 at a 2σ level of confidence (Table 4.2). This date is difficult to reconcile with the stratigraphic evidence, particularly as the burial used in the analysis was cut into a pit containing pottery dated to *c*.AD 750–850. Results on a second skeleton are currently awaited and until receipt of this result, the stratigraphic evidence will be used to date these burials

It seems unlikely, although not impossible, that the shortlived cemeteries at Six Dials and the later of the two at St Mary's Stadium were in use at the same time. However, both cemeteries were in use at the same time as the burial grounds at St Mary's Church and/or SOU 13. There is increasing evidence for small, short-lived non-churchyard cemeteries both within and around settlements during in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, even when a church and churchyard is present (Hadley 2007, 194; Zadora-Rio 2003, 3). Where there is an ecclesiastical presence in the settlement, non-churchyard cemeteries, such as those in Hamwic, may lie under the control of the Church and form some of the more diffuse elements of a minster complex despite the absence of any associated buildings (Blair 1988, 54). In some cases, these cemeteries may have had free-standing crosses. Indeed, it has been suggested that one of the post-holes lying on the south side of the church at SOU 13 may

have held a free standing cross (Morton 1992a, 123), which may have predated the church or have been a feature within the churchyard (Morton 1992b, 52). The post-settings for standing crosses leave little distinctive evidence within the archaeological record and it is possible that standing crosses may have been present in the non-churchyard cemeteries in Hamwic. Thus the church may have influenced the way these individuals were interred, but they were not necessarily all being interred adjacent to the church. Finally although it seems probable that the non-churchyard cemeteries were part of a minster complex, the possibility that some or all of these groups of non-churchyard burials are completely independent of any ecclesiastical presence within the settlement, and may represent the persistence of an alternative non-ecclesiastical funerary practice, cannot be excluded (Zadora-Rio 2003, 3).

Not all of Hamwic's dead received formal burial in one of the settlement's burial grounds. The remains of two neonates have been found buried in middle Saxon rubbish pits at SOU 36 (Morton 1992a, 198) and Six Dials (Andrews 1997, 204). Occasional isolated burials of infants have been found in the early Saxon settlements, often in sunken-featured buildings (Hamerow 2006, 4–5). In a survey of special deposits of human bone found in early Anglo-Saxon settlements one-third were of infants (Hamerow 2006, 13). This is significantly higher proportion than the *c*.6% found in early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. The differential treatment of infants in death has been used to explain the comparative lack of infant burials observed in early Anglo-Saxon burial grounds, perhaps the very young were not necessarily interred within community burial grounds (Crawford 1993, 84–5; Crawford 1999, 75–6). It is possible that the Hamwic infant burials represent some form of continuation of this tradition, perhaps rubbish pits close to domestic occupation were considered an appropriate place to dispose of the bodies of neonates and the stillborn in middle Saxon Southampton in certain circumstances (Andrews 1997, 204; Morton 1992b, 52). Another possibility is that perhaps the two infants found in rubbish pits were unbaptised and thus excluded from community burial grounds (Morton 1992b, 52), while illicit disposal away from unusual burial locations, for whatever reason, cannot be excluded.

Illicit disposal may also provide an explanation for the isolated west-east burial of an adult male found in a ditch at SOU 124 on the site of the later Saxon town, some 500 meters to the south-west of Hamwic (Figure 4.8) (Shaw n.d.). The burial has been radiocarbon dated to AD 775–960 at a 2σ level of confidence (Table 4.2), suggesting the burial occurred before the site became the main focus of settlement in the Southampton area or during the early days of the late Saxon town. The disorganised body position suggests that this individual was not accorded a formal interment. Another burial worth mentioning in this context is burial 5663 from the boundary ditch associated with the Cook Street cemetery. This has been radiocarbon dated to the tenth to early thirteenth centuries (Garner 2001, 175) (Table 4.2), and was deposited several centuries later than the burials in the late seventh- and early eighth-century cemetery. Another of the three skeletons and two skulls that were found in the ditch (burial 201) has produced a seventh- to ninth-century radiocarbon date (Garner 2001, 177). While the latter burial could have been contemporary to the burials in the rest of the cemetery, there is a possibility that it too could post-date the Cook Street cemetery, possibly also representing the use of the boundary ditch for burial after the cemetery had passed out of general use. The evidence is far from clear, but it is worth noting that both burials were north-south aligned (following the alignment of the ditch) and have one or both legs flexed in an era where west-east aligned, supine and extended burial was increasingly universal. Thus, the possibility that these burials represent a later and perhaps less formal phase of burial at Cook Street must at least be entertained. Formal and informal inhumations have been found within ditches within a number of settlements sites,

including Yarnton in Oxfordshire (Reynolds 2009, 219; Hey 2004, 163). While the informal interments carry connotations of illicit disposal and exclusion, the formal interments may simply be a reflection of the comparatively unregulated nature of burial during this period or the continuation of earlier traditions.

Burial in the Southampton area after the decline of Hamwic

The ninth century saw a change in the pattern of settlement in the Southampton area. The archaeological evidence suggests that by AD 900 the settlement of Hamwic was largely deserted, although scattered occupation, possibly centred around key foci, may have persisted into the tenth century (Morton 1992a, 70, 72; Andrews 1997, 255). This did not mark the end of non-rural settlement in the Southampton area and by the early tenth century settlement had begun on the site of what was to be the late Saxon and medieval town (Figure 4.1), lying some 500 metres to the south-west of Hamwic on higher and more defensible land alongside the River Test (Morton 1992a, 73).

Hamwic's decline seems likely to have been the result of multiple factors. Hamwic appears to have owed much of its existence to trade. Consequently, the vicissitudes of trade were always likely to impact on the settlement and a number of factors combined to disrupt commerce, as well as Hamwic's position in trading networks, during the ninth century. Trade and the collection of tolls required a level of social stability and this is likely to have been absent, at times, on both sides of the channel during the ninth century. On the continent there was the general instability caused by the civil wars between Charlemagne's heirs in the first half of the ninth century, as well as the anarchic conditions within the Empire in the later part of the century and the disruption caused by Viking activities (Hodges 1982, 156–7; Morton 1992a, 76). Similarly, in England there were numerous incursions by Viking armies in the ninth century, with Hamwic, itself, directly experiencing this turbulence when it was raided by Vikings in AD 840 (ASC A and E. s.a. 837(840) – Swanton 2000, 62–3; Morton 1992a, 75–6). This may have served to reduce trade at the settlement although it should be noted that raids on Quentovic in AD 842 did not result in the end of that settlement (Morton 1992a, 76–7). In addition, it has been suggested that much of Hamwic's trade was based on agricultural goods and the Viking incursions in Wessex may have also resulted in a reduction in levels of agricultural surplus, leading to a dearth of goods to export (Hinton 1999, 29). Finally, it is possible that Hamwic's position on the edge of the north-west European trading network contributed to its decline. The settlement's peripheral location may have meant that when the West Saxons established control over the Kent ports in the first half of the ninth century, their more central location within the trading network may have resulted in the relocation of much of Hamwic's trade to the east.

By the time settlement had been largely abandoned at Hamwic, burial had ceased at three of its four post-mid-eighth century burial grounds. However, establishing exactly when burial ceased is more problematic. St Mary's Cemetery II has been dated to the late eighth century, but it may have been in use during the ninth century and exactly when interment finished is unknown. As has been discussed earlier, the presence of rubbish pits above the burials at SOU 13 suggests that the cemetery had been abandoned before the decline of the Hamwic settlement. The cemetery at Six Dials is thought to date to the later part of the ninth century, making it the last known burial ground founded within the settlement (Andrews 1997, 203). The cemetery was short-lived and appears to have gone out of use by the end of the ninth century. In contrast, the radiocarbon dates from three interments from

St Mary's churchyard demonstrate that burial continued at the church between the tenth and twelfth centuries (Table 4.2) (Smith 1995, 259), after Hamwic had to all intents and purposes ceased to exist. It is possible that all those interred at St Mary's were members of the religious community or dwelt in those parts of Hamwic where occupation had persisted in some form. However, St Mary's Church was known to hold a monopoly over the burial rights for Southampton in the post-Conquest period (Hase 1988, 45), until this was contested from the thirteenth century by the Augustinian Friary (Ruddock 1947, 140–1). Hence it seems likely that many of the occupants of the late Saxon town were laid to rest in St Mary's Churchyard (Morton 1992a, 50).

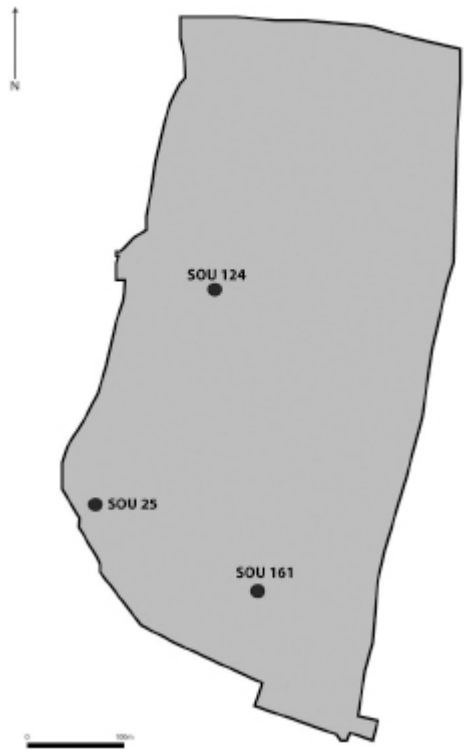

Figure 4.8: Outline of walled area of Medieval Southampton showing location of late Saxon burials (adapted from Holdsworth 1984, 338)

The recent identification of late Saxon burials from two sites within the medieval town suggests the St Mary's Church did not hold a monopoly over burial in the tenth and early eleventh century. At the first site, SOU 161/266, which lies adjacent to the High Street, the disturbed partial remains of at least three individuals were uncovered (Figure 4.8). The burials were found during excavations in the late 1960s and had been disturbed by the construction of later medieval stone houses, which suggested a possible late Saxon date for the burials (Platt 1975, 232–69; McKinley 1995, 3). Indeed, radiocarbon dating of one of these burials gave a date of AD 770–1020 at a 2σ level of confidence (Table 4.2) (Russel and Leivers 2003), demonstrating the presence of late Saxon burials with the town. The

burials were badly disturbed and little can be said about the nature of funerary provision accorded these individuals.

At the second site, SOU 25 at the Westgate, a row of three undisturbed articulated burials were uncovered in the late 1970s (Figure 4.8) (Webster and Cherry 1980, 251). These burials lay on the edge of the excavated area and it has been suggested by the excavator that they formed the edge of a cemetery, which extended north into an unexcavated area. All three burials were orientated west-east and two of the burials were supine extended while the third lay partially crouched on its side (Webster and Cherry 1980, 251; Blackman 1979). Two of the three burials were subject to radiocarbon analysis giving dates of AD 895–1020 and AD 895–1025 at a 2σ level of confidence (Table 4.2). There was no evidence for the use of coffins, wooden linings, pillow stones or charcoal in any of the graves, although one burial was accompanied by a piece of animal bone, which may be an accidental inclusion, while another had a knife by its arm. Knives, in the absence of other grave goods, are often thought to be characteristic of late seventh and eighth century burials, yet there is increasing evidence that knives continued to be occasionally included in late Saxon burials, perhaps indicating the persistence of clothed burial as a minority rite (Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 140), with other examples in Wessex found at Bevis Grave (Hampshire) (Rudkin 2001), Lewknor (Oxfordshire) (Blair 1994, 73; Chambers 1976, 83–4) and Chimney (Oxfordshire) (Crawford 1989, 54).

The burials at SOU 25 and SOU 266 lie approximately 250 metres apart in the southern part of the medieval town. It is possible that all the burials come from a single cemetery, but this appears unlikely as no human remains have been reported from excavations in the area lying between the two sites. Instead, it appears that burial was occurring in at least two separate locations within the settlement during the late Saxon period, although the fragmentary nature of the evidence makes it difficult to say much about the precise nature of the burials. It may be that the situation at Southampton was analogous to that at Winchester during the same period. There, the churchyards of the Old Minster, New Minster and to a lesser extent Nunnaminster in the south-east corner of the walled city provided the main focus of burial (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992; Scobie and Qualmann 1993), but there was a large cemetery, Staple Gardens, some 350 metres from the minster in the western part of the walled area (Kipling and Scobie 1990). In the case of Southampton, the minster church at St Mary's provided one option for the occupants of the late Saxon town with some of the population being interred within its churchyard, while others favoured, or were only permitted, burial in satellite cemeteries within the late Saxon settlement.

Burial within the late Saxon town appears to have ceased by the early eleventh century. Although the evidence is fragmentary, it suggests the late tenth and early eleventh century saw the increased centralisation of burial around the minster church in Hamwic with the end of burial in satellite cemeteries within the Saxon town. This echoes the pattern seen elsewhere in Wessex, with the archaeological evidence suggesting that it is only in tenth and eleventh century that burial becomes completely concentrated around minster, manorial and urban churches with the virtual disappearance of scattered cemeteries and burials within settlements (Cherryson 2005, 241). This was a process driven, in part, by the minster churches, such as St Mary's, as they increasingly sought to enforce its monopoly on burial rights against the growing challenge posed by the new manorial and urban churches (Blair 2005, 463–5). A monopoly over burial also brought with it financial rewards in the form of *soulscot* – an ecclesiastical charge for burial levied at the graveside (Blair 1988, 8). *Soulscot* was an important source of revenue to religious houses and one they were, at times, over-zealous to collect. Aelfric's first pastoral letter to Archbishop Wulfstan written in *c*.AD

1006 describes how 'Some priests are glad when men die and they flock to the corpse like greedy ravens when they see a carcass in the wood or in field' (Blair 2005, 463). These comments were made in the early eleventh century, precisely where burial appears to have become increasingly centralised around minster churches and a period when the minster church's monopoly over burial was being contested by lay foundations – a fact which may have provided added incentive for the clergy to pursue any lay individuals choosing to be interred away from the church with increased vigour. It should be noted that *soulscot* may not necessarily have been for a space within a churchyard, but for ecclesiastical provision in the form of last rites and other funerary activities (Blair 2005, 437).

Another factor which may have contributed to the centralisation of burial around churches was the consecration of churchyards. The practice is first mentioned in documentary sources from the late ninth century, although references remain infrequent until the tenth century (Gittos 2002, 201). Consecration was used to separate the sacred from the secular and required a greater definition of churchyard boundaries (Gittos 2002, 202), establishing churchyard cemeteries as fixed and separate places within the landscape (Thompson 2002, 232). It would have been simpler to enclose and consecrate a single central burial ground adjacent to a church rather than a number of scattered satellite cemeteries. A final consideration is that by the eleventh century, there appears to have been an increasing expectation by the general population of a final resting place in consecrated ground near to a church, and as churchyard burial became virtually universal, interment in away from ecclesiastical buildings may have been increasingly perceived as inappropriate (Thompson 2004, 179–80).

Discussion

This consideration of the variation in burial location and the development of churchyard burial in early medieval Southampton would not have been possible but for the extensive post-war excavations that have occurred within the city. Yet our understanding of settlement and burial in Southampton is far from complete. Less than 10% of Hamwic and the later medieval town have been excavated and the records of some of the earliest excavations can be confusing. Moreover, as with any urban environment, later occupation limits access to the early medieval evidence and affects its preservation. Yet despite the incomplete nature of evidence, the existing data provides a vivid illustration of the complexity of the transition to churchyard burial during the later Saxon period. It also demonstrates the importance of radiocarbon dating unaccompanied inhumations (Blair 1994; O'Brien and Roberts 1996, 162; Buckberry 2004). For only by adopting a policy of routinely radiocarbon dating not just large cemetery excavations, but also isolated inhumations, small groups of burials, and even the single, or partial, inhumations recovered during keyhole excavations, will a true picture of the nature of the transition to churchyard burial and diversity of burial location during the late Saxon period be obtained. Radiocarbon dating is no universal panacea, it is expensive and the date ranges produced are still much broader than is ideal. Yet without it there would be no conclusive evidence for early medieval burial at St Mary's Church, no late Saxon burials in the late Saxon town and the burial in the ditch at SOU 124 would still be undated.

For much of the early medieval period, the evidence from Southampton is for multiple scattered cemeteries, some with associated churches and some without, with burial only becoming centralised around St Mary's church in the eleventh century. This demonstrates that the traditional model of a rapid transition to burial either adjacent to or within a church

is no longer tenable. Instead the Southampton evidence points to a great diversity in burial location in the centuries following the introduction of Christianity, with burial persisting away from churchyards into the tenth century. Moreover, the interment of some individuals in ditches and pits may simply reflect ease of disposal but could be a continuation of an early Anglo-Saxon tradition of 'special deposits' within settlements. It should also be noted that burial away from the church may not necessarily equate with freedom from church control. There is increasing evidence that the minster churches of the later Saxon period were just the core of diffuse ecclesiastical complexes, containing among other things satellite cemeteries (Blair 1992, 257). It is possible that all interred in Hamwic's burial grounds, be they associated with a church or not, were buried under the auspices of the Church, although determining the extent of the Church's influence over dispersed burial grounds is problematic.

While the wealth of burial data from Southampton provides an invaluable insight into the nature of burial location and the development of churchyard burial during the early medieval period, it is also important to realise that the unique nature of the Hamwic settlement may have affected the nature of burial in the area, particularly during the eighth and ninth centuries. The high number of cemeteries seen in Hamwic may, in part, simply be a result of the higher population density seen in, what for the period, was a large settlement. Indeed, many of the alterations in cemetery number and cemetery location seen in early medieval Southampton are linked to changes in population density and population distribution. Most of Hamwic cemeteries except at St Mary's Church and at Six Dials, appear to gone out of use in the first half of the ninth century (Andrews 1997, 203). The presence of burials cut into the road at Six Dials during the last decades of the ninth century suggests that occupation persisted later in the north-west of the settlement as Hamwic's fortunes declined and that the nature of that settlement had changed with the roads no longer being maintained. By the end of the ninth century the settlement was largely abandoned and burial had ended in Hamwic away from St Mary's church, while the shift in occupation some 500m to the south-west coincided with the appearance of burials within the late Saxon town.

Whether perceived as urban, or proto-urban, Hamwic differed from many contemporary settlements in both its size and social structure. The higher population density and resulting competition for land restricted the space available for burial resulting in the high levels of intercutting characteristic of late Saxon and medieval churchyards being observed in the middle Saxon churchyard at SOU 13. Hamwic is also likely to have had a more complex social structure than seen in rural settlements, and the possibility that different cemeteries may have served different parts of the urban community cannot be excluded. Finally and perhaps ironically given the comparatively large number of burials in Hamwic not apparently associated with ecclesiastical structures, it is possible that the adoption of churchyard burial by the laity may have been accelerated in non-rural centres. It can be no coincidence that the eighth- to ninth-century churchyard at SOU 13 in Hamwic contains some of the earliest substantial evidence for lay churchyard burial within the Wessex area and it lies in the earliest non-rural settlement within the West Saxon Kingdom. Access to pastoral care has important implications for the development of churchyard burial, with the level of contact between a religious community and the surrounding population affecting the extent to which the laity may have considered churchyard burial a viable and desirable option (Blair 2005, 180). In Hamwic, the combination of a large population and an ecclesiastical presence within the settlement may have served to promote churchyard burial among the laity resulting in much higher levels of lay burial in the vicinity of a church than

was seen elsewhere at that time in Wessex.

Site	Date	Associated church?	No. of burials	Stone linings	Charcoal Burials	Grave goods	Coffins/ wooden linings	Coffin fittings	Pillow stones	Stone grave covers	Other features/ comments	Reference
Beckery Chapel (So)	6–9C	Yes	58	●	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Rahtz and Hirst 1974
SOU 13 (Ha)	8–9C	Yes	81	–	–	●	●	–	–	–	–	Morton 1992a
Six Dials (Ha)	9C	No	14	–	–	–	–		–	–	–	Andrews 1997
St Mary's Stadium II (Ha)	8–9C	No	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Gravel lined grave	Birbeck 2005
Wells Cathedral (So)	7–12C	Yes	242	●	–	–	●	–	●	●	Head recesses, mortar lined graves	Rodwell 2001
Exeter Cathedral (Dv)	Mid–late Saxon	Yes	114	●	●	●	●	●	●	–	Dark earth linings,	Henderson and Bidwell 1982
Old Minster, Winchester (Ha)	7–11C	Yes	743	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sand lined grave	Kjølbye-Biddle 1992
New Minster (Ha)	10–11C	Yes	109	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	–	
Nunnaminster (Ha)	10–11C	Yes	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	●	–	Scobie and Qualmann 1993
Romsey Abbey (Ha)	Mid to late Saxon	Yes	31	●	●	–	–	–	–	–	–	Scott 1996
Bath Abbey (So)	8–10C	Yes	31	●	●	–	●	●	●	●	Foot stones	Bath Archaeological Trust archives
Trowbridge (Wi)	10–12C	Yes	164	●	●	–	●	–	●	●	Head recess	Graham and Davies 1993
Barnstaple Castle (Dv)	Late Saxon	Yes	105	●	●	–	●	–	●	●	–	Miles 1986
Staple Gardens (Ha)	9–11C	?	288	–	●	●	●	–	●	–	Lead coffin	Kipling and Scobie 1990; SG85 – SG89 archive
Temple of Sulis Minerva (So)	11C	Yes	15	●	–	–	●	–	●	–	–	Cunliffe and Davenport 1985
Portchester Castle (Ha)	11C	No	22	–	–	–	●	–	–	–	–	Cunliffe 1976

Table 4.3. Distribution of grave types and grave variations within a selection of cemeteries in the Wessex region, which were in use after the mid-eighth century. • = present, – = absent.

The later burials from Saxon Southampton are relatively homogenous when compared with the earlier late seventhand early eighth-century cemeteries in the Southampton area and elsewhere in Wessex (Stoodley this volume). The later cemeteries contain few grave goods like those seen in the early cemetery at St Mary's Stadium (Loader 2005) and no penannular ditches or grave structures like those at Cook Street or SOU 32 (Garner 2001, 181; Morton 1992a, 175). Nor are the types of grave variation, such as charcoal burials, the use of pillow stones, elaborate coffin fittings and the use of stone grave linings, seen elsewhere in late Saxon cemeteries in Wessex, present in the Southampton material (Table 4.3) (Cherryson 2005; Hadley 2000b, 207–8; 2002, 226; Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 132–6; Buckberry 2007, 117; Buckberry this volume; Holloway this volume). There is some evidence for the use of coffins or wooden linings and a few burials contain small personal items such as knives. Yet why was there so little variation among the Southampton burials after the middle of the eighth century? One factor is the date of the burials. Most of the later Saxon burials from Southampton date to the second half of the eighth and ninth centuries, with far fewer dating to the tenth and eleventh centuries when there was a greater diversity in grave elaboration. Most forms of late Saxon grave variation, such as charcoal burials, stone lining and the use of pillow stones are indicative of extra expenditure of time or resources and may in part be linked to high 'status' (Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 143). Many of these variations appear at a time when churchyard burial was becoming increasingly prevalent. Perhaps as churchyard burial was adopted by increasing numbers of the population, burial *ad sanctos* no longer had sufficient status alone and it was necessary for those with means to distinguish themselves in death in other ways (Cherryson 2005, 169). In addition, the geographical distribution of burial elaboration is far from uniform during the late Saxon period. Greater levels of elaborate later Saxon burial practices, such as charcoal burials and coffin fittings, tend to be found in churchyards associated with high status religious establishments (Buckberry 2004; 2007, 119–20; Cherryson 2005, 155). By the tenth and eleventh centuries, the importance of the settlement at Southampton had been eclipsed by the development of Winchester as a political and religious centre. Southampton's major church, St Mary's, lacked the connections to the West Saxon royal

house, which had brought money and status to the Minster churches in Winchester and the Abbey in nearby Romsey. Thus, it is possible that even had substantial areas of the St Mary's Churchyard been excavated, the diversity in burial provision seen in the Minster cemeteries in Winchester may not have been present.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following individuals and institutions for providing information on unpublished sites and additional details on published sites; Duncan Brown, Jane Ellis and Karen Wardley (Southampton City Museum); Matt Garner, Mike Smith and Andy Russel (Southampton City Archaeology Unit); Graham Scobie (Winchester Museums Service), David Rudkin (Fishbourne Roman Palace). Alan Morton (Southampton City Council), and Phil Andrews (Wessex Archaeology) not only provided invaluable insights on SOU 13 and Six Dials but also the wider archaeology of early medieval Southampton. Figures 4.5 and 4.7 appear courtesy of Southampton City Council Arts and Heritage.

I would like to thank Jo Buckberry, Howard Williams, Dawn Hadley and the anonymous referee for their comments on this paper. Any errors remain the author's alone. This research was funded by a University of Sheffield Studentship and the radiocarbon dating was funded by an ORADS grant from NERC.

Addendum

An isolated skeleton has recently been found on land belonging to the City College (SOU1484/254), which lies in the southern part of the Hamwic settlement. It has been radiocarbon dated to 610–770 AD at a 2σ level of confidence (M. Garner *pers. comm.*).

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5. An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Worcester Cathedral

Christopher Guy

Introduction

The Chapter House at Worcester Cathedral dates from the early twelfth century and is the first known example of the circular or polygonal form for such buildings. The form was later adopted at Lincoln Cathedral, Hereford Cathedral and Abbey Dore, a Cistercian monastery in Herefordshire, amongst other places.

Very little is known about the two Anglo-Saxon Cathedrals at Worcester since, like those elsewhere, they were demolished and replaced following the Norman Conquest in 1066. The first Cathedral, founded *c*.680 and dedicated to St Peter, was probably originally a timber structure. The second Cathedral, dedicated to St Mary, was built in the late tenth century (Barrow 1996). The two Cathedrals seem to have co-existed until St Wulfstan started the present building in 1084. Although there are fragments of re-used masonry such as column bases, capitals and abaci incorporated in the blind arcading in the slype to the north of the Chapter House, the locations of the pre-Conquest churches and their spatial relationship are unknown. It is, however, possible that a slab of pebbles in mortar, the extent of which was not determined, found in a small excavation in the south aisle of the Crypt in 1984, may have been part of the floor of one of the Cathedrals (Guy 1994, 6).

There have been no major excavations at Worcester Cathedral comparable with those at, for example, York Minster (Phillips and Heywood 1995), Winchester Cathedral (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle forthcoming) and Canterbury Cathedral (Blockley *et al*. 1997). Research excavations outside the Chapter House in 1996, 1997 and 1999 had suggested, among other possibilities, that the present Chapter House might be an adaptation of an Anglo-Saxon rotunda (Crawford 1999). The opportunity to undertake an excavation inside the Chapter House in 2003 in advance of the insertion of under-floor heating and a new floor provided a chance to answer this question.

In the event no Anglo-Saxon structures were found but it was discovered that the Norman Chapter House had been built over a cemetery. The almost total absence of grave goods, together with the general west-east alignment of the burials, would imply that this was a Christian cemetery dating from the later Anglo-Saxon period. The mix of adults, both men and women, as well as infants and children, further indicates that this was a lay – not monastic – cemetery.

Post-excavation work is still ongoing. An assessment of the human skeletal material was undertaken by Dr Jo Buckberry (University of Bradford) in October 2006 but the bones have not yet been fully analysed. The analysis should provide not only information on age at death, sex, height and stature but also indications on diet, disease and trauma. Since very

few of the burials appear to be post-Conquest in date the excavation has given us an opportunity to study in depth an urban population from the pre-Conquest period. Once the analysis has been completed the results will be compared and contrasted with those from other sites so that the information can be seen in a wider context.

The Excavations

The series of excavations undertaken outside the Chapter House in the 1990s revealed the foundations of a substantial stone wall concentric with the building and about three metres from it (Figure 5.1). Running inwards from this wall, and of one build with it, were further foundations. These foundations were overlain by buttresses, which were added when the exterior of the Chapter House was remodelled in the fourteenth century. Since the Chapter House at Worcester is the first known example of its form, it was postulated that this wall might be evidence of an Anglo-Saxon rotunda associated with one or other of the Anglo-Saxon cathedrals known to have existed on this site. An early date for the curved wall was suggested by the pilaster buttresses on its external face. Only the bottom course of these survived and only the lowest course of the wall itself remained where it had not been robbed out in the fourteenth century.

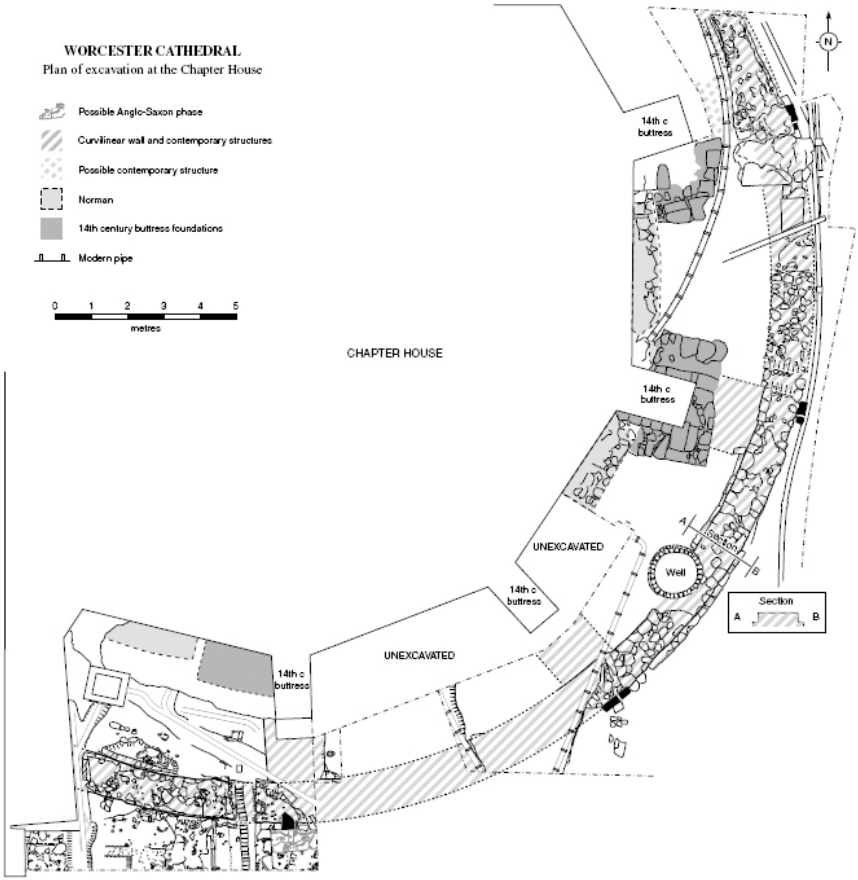

Figure 5.1: Plan of features found during excavations outside the Chapter House.

One of the research aims of the 2003 excavation was to test the hypothesis that the Chapter House was an adaptation of an Anglo-Saxon rotunda. It was also thought possible that there might be medieval burials, as Chapter Houses are known from other sites, such as Battle Abbey in Sussex (Hare 1985, 22), to have been used for this purpose. One documentary reference has been found, which is to the burial of William Beachamp in 1170 'at the entrance to the Chapter House' (Stevens 1722, 468). Because of the location of the site, Scheduled Monument Consent was necessary and approval had to be obtained from the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England. In order to minimize the impact on the archaeology, excavation was limited to a depth of 0.6m below the existing floor.

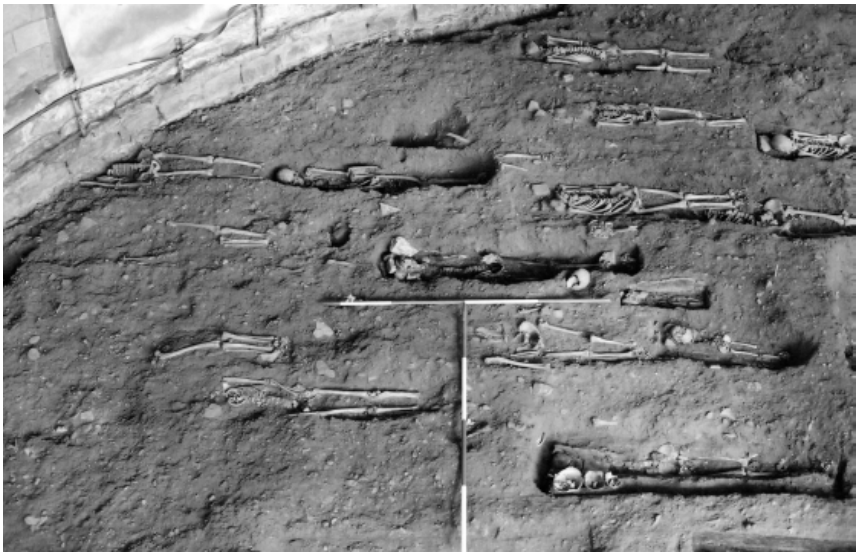

Figure 5.2: General view of burials in the north-west quadrant of the Chapter House, looking north.

Having cleared the joists and debris from below the Victorian wooden floor, burials immediately began to appear (Figure 5.2), and from the numbers and the locations it was clear that they could not all be medieval. Some, probably the majority, are of later Anglo-Saxon date, particularly those cut by the foundation of the Chapter House wall or by the footings for the central pillar. Other burials were cut by rubble-filled pits of seventeenth-century date, probably associated with post-Civil War restoration of the building. Other intrusions that cut some of the burials included post-holes, which were probably connected with scaffolding, either for the original construction of the Norman Chapter House or for alterations carried out in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

About 180 burials were excavated, but where no bones were above the top of the lowest level of bedding for the new floor the skeletons were left *in situ*. In some cases the outline of a grave could be distinguished although the skeleton itself was not exposed. Thus an unknown number of burials still remain in place below the new floor. It was very difficult to distinguish grave cuts because the graves were backfilled with the soil removed to make them. In many cases a grave was not recognized until either the top of a coffin or the skeleton itself was found.

The inter-cutting of the burials has allowed nine 'levels' of burial to be identified (level 1 being the latest), although this does not mean that all burials grouped in the same level are contemporary. Variations in alignment, depth of burial, layout of the body within the grave, *etc*. may allow refinement of the grouping. The amount of inter-cutting would suggest that the graveyard was in use for a long period of time.

It is proposed to carry out radio-carbon dating of a sequence of seven inter-cutting skeletons in order to establish a more specific date-range for the use of the cemetery. As the earliest burials were left *in situ* it will not be possible to give a definitive date to the foundation of the cemetery. Since the latest burial in this sequence cannot be stratigraphically linked to the construction of the Chapter House, it is also proposed to date a further sequence of four burials, the latest of which was cut by the foundations of the

Chapter House wall.

The majority of the burials are likely to be later Anglo-Saxon in date. They were clearly Christian burials as they were aligned approximately west-east, with the head to the west, and lacked grave-goods. Although there are slight variations in orientation it has not yet been possible to discern any consistent pattern. However, there do appear to be signs of rows aligned roughly north-south. The mix of men, women and children would indicate that this is part of the lay cemetery associated with the Cathedral, not a monastic cemetery. The first Cathedral in Worcester was founded *c*.680 but a second Cathedral was constructed in the late tenth century when St Oswald turned it into a monastic foundation (Barrow 1996). As the Chapter House was constructed in the first quarter of the twelfth century and formed part of the monastery laid out by St Wulfstan (bishop of Worcester 1062–95), a date range of *c*. 680 – *c*.1100 can be suggested for the burials. It is hoped that the proposed dating programme will enable use of the cemetery to be dated more closely.

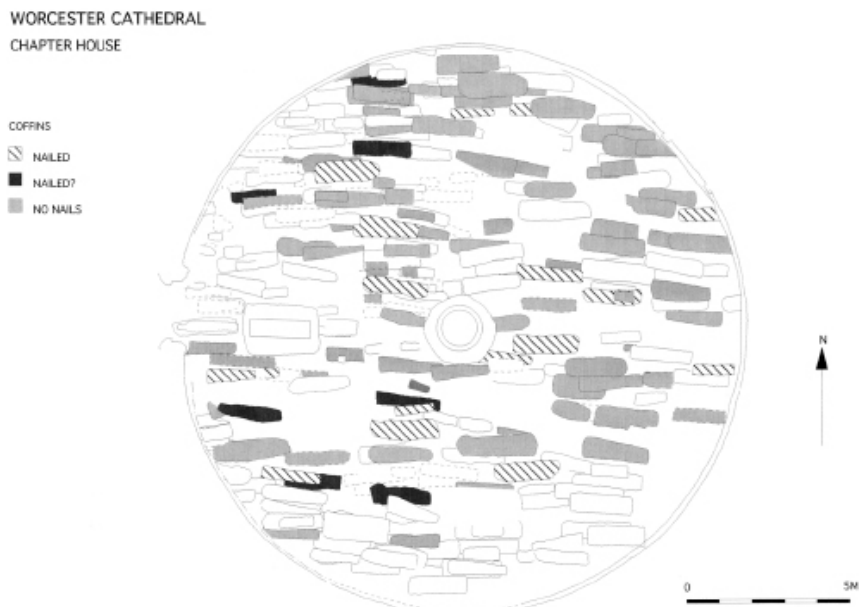

Figure 5.3: Plan showing distribution of coffins.

Coffins

Significant numbers of burials were in wooden coffins (Figure 5.3). Unlike St Peter's Barton-upon-Humber, Lincolnshire, where coffins survived because of waterlogged conditions (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982), at Worcester some fragments of wood survived because of the very dry conditions below the Chapter House. However, in some cases the only evidence for the coffin was a void where the wood had rotted away, while in others it was the presence of nails. Fragments of timber were sampled from 48 coffins but these have yet to be examined to identify the type of wood used. The width of the void would suggest that normally the planks used to make the coffins were *c*.10 – 20mm thick, although in a few instances the planks were recorded as being 40mm thick. Unfortunately the wood did

not survive well enough to enable the details of the construction of the coffins to be established clearly. In particular it is not known if the coffin boards were made of single planks or of multiple planks jointed together. Nor is it known if, in the absence of nails, the components were jointed together or held in place by dowels (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982, 310–12).

There was very little evidence for the practice of charring the coffins before interment in order to preserve the wood and, by implication, the burial (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 127). The context description for one coffin, [325], refers to an 'ashy stain', suggesting that the boards had been charred. However this appears to have been an isolated example.

Table 5.1 is an attempt to quantify how many of the burials were in coffins. It can be seen that a large proportion of burials were in coffins, particularly those which are from the latest levels. Of these 106 coffins, only 17 (16%) were definitely held together by nails while a further 13 (12%) might have been. The figures relating to the unexcavated burials may understate the number in coffins, since the evidence for a coffin may not have been reached at the point where excavation ceased. There do not appear to have been any examples of coffins held together by angle brackets, which have been found at Anglo-Saxon cemeteries elsewhere, for example St Oswald's Priory in Gloucester (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 208–16). In some cases the nails appear to have been used only to fasten the lid of the coffin down, not for the rest of the construction. In other cases the nails had been used to fix the sides of the coffin to the base. Where nails were found in the grave fill, rather than *in situ*, it is uncertain that they indicated a nailed coffin since they may have been residual. A strip of iron *c*.18mm wide, 2mm thick and *c*.100mm long <SF 46>, which was bent over at one end and formed into a spike, may possibly have come from a coffin. It was found in the soil into which the graves were cut.

	Excavated			Unexcavated		
Level	Burials	Coffins	Percentage	Burials	Coffins	Percentage
1	59	34	57.6	35	9	25.7
2	58	24	41.4	26	8	30.8
3	31	14	45.2	19	2	10.5
4	15	6	40.0	10	2	20.0
5	10	4	40.0	7	0	0.0
6	6	2	33.3	5	1	20.0
7	2	0	0.0	4	0	0.0
8	-	-	-	2	0	0.0
9	-	-	-	1	0	0.0
Total	181	84	46.4	109	22	20.2

Table 5.1: The percentage of burials in coffins.

There does not appear to be any pattern to the spatial distribution of the coffins themselves, or of those held together by nails. This might indicate that no specific areas of the cemetery were reserved for those of different social status as there were no clusters either of nailed coffins or of coffins *per se*. The use of a coffin for burial does not seem to have been restricted by age or gender as adults of both sexes were accorded this rite, along with infants and children. This is in keeping with other late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Buckberry 2007).

Where it is possible to determine the shape of the coffin, the majority seem to have been rectangular. However, there are about 12 examples of coffins that are tapered, being wider

at the head than the foot. There were no clear examples of coffins that were rectangular around the upper body but tapered towards the feet although one coffin might have been this shape. Two coffins of this shape at St Oswald's Priory in Gloucester have been dated to the twelfth to thirteenth century and contained neonate burials (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 216–7).

The coffins seem to have been made as required, since no instances were observed where the coffin was substantially larger than the body it contained, nor of a body packed into a coffin that was too small. This is particularly true of the infant burials, where the coffins had been made to the right size.

There were no clear examples of planks being used to cover a burial, as opposed to the body being within a complete coffin (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 182). However, in one case a plank [586] was found some height above the grave it appeared to relate to and was resting at an angle, rather than flat. When excavated, it was thought that the plank was in this position because the grave had been disturbed by later activity. As the burial itself was not fully excavated it is not clear if there was a coffin associated with it or not. Only the skull of the skeleton was exposed and appeared to be that of a juvenile.

In one burial there was a branch [872] above the skull and upper part of the torso [697] (Figure 5.4). The branch was placed within the coffin, not on top of it, and thus represents a deliberate act. The wood has not yet been identified, but its species may help to suggest possible reasons for the inclusion of the branch in the coffin. It was about 50mm in diameter but only 0.3m long. From its shape it was clearly not a staff and the survival of bark shows that it had not been worked in any way. The fact that the burial was in a coffin also suggests that the branch was not intended to protect the skull during backfi lling of the grave. A possible parallel comes from Lichfield Cathedral, Staff ordshire, where the bark of a fragment of branch wood was found above the legs and pelvis of a burial at the east end of the nave (Rodwell 2004, 34). This burial is thought to date from the fifteenth century and perhaps be that of a pilgrim.

Figure 5.4: Skeleton 697 with fragment of branch overlying face and upper torso.

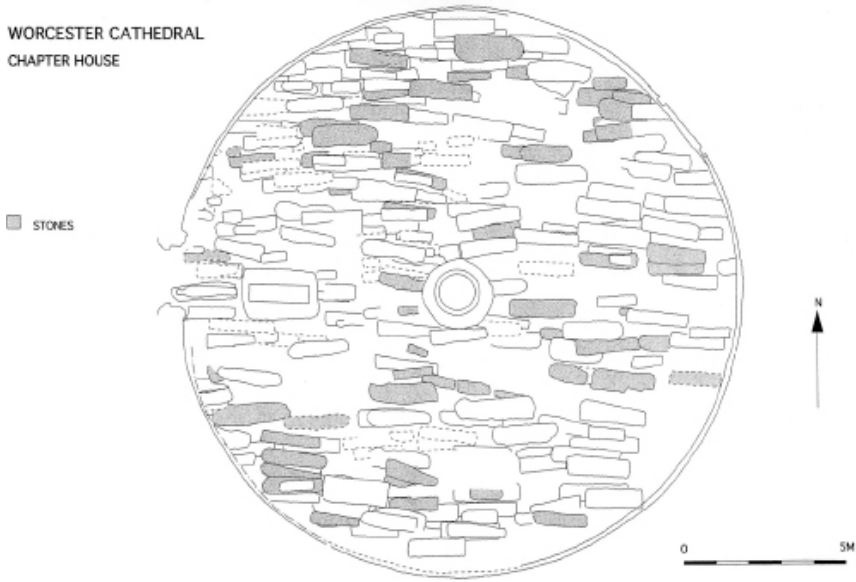

Figure 5.5: Plan showing graves containing stone arrangements.

Wooden rods or staves are fairly frequent finds with burials (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005). An example comes from Worcester Cathedral itself, where a burial of late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century date close to the south-east tower pier was accompanied by a cleft ash staff 1.55m long with a double-pronged iron spike at its base (Lubin 1990). This burial has also been interpreted as that of a pilgrim. The majority of burials with rods date from the medieval period but the earliest example, from Barton-upon-Humber, may date from the eleventh century (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982, 312). Some of the thicker staves, including that from within Worcester Cathedral, may be real or symbolic pilgrim staffs. In many cases the rods, often of coppiced willow or hazel, were too thin to have had a practical function and may have been intended to symbolise eternal life.

It is possible that in one burial the head rested on a pillow of organic material within a wooden coffin. Twigs were observed in the region of the skull and a sample of material was taken (Sample 51). This will be analysed as part of the on-going post-excavation analysis of the cemetery.

Textiles

In nine cases textiles survived. In most instances, although the textile survived very well the bone in the same area was in a very poor state of preservation. Is this because of the textile? These textiles are most likely to be the remains of shrouds. However, as in all but one case the body had been buried in a coffin, it is possible that some pieces may be the remains of clothing. The exception was a medieval burial [205] (probably dating from the twelfth to fourteenth century) where, instead of containing a coffin, the grave was lined with mortar and had a shaped recess for the head. Although graves of this nature dating from the pre-Conquest period are known, for example at Wells Cathedral, Somerset (Rodwell 2001, 65), the alignment of this grave on and just inside the Norman doorway to the Chapter House

indicates a post-Conquest date. It is possible that in another case the textiles had been used as a pillow because the remains were attached to lumps of slag <SF 21> that had been used as head supports. The textiles have yet to be studied but the material appears to be wool. In all cases, the skeleton where textile was found was that of an adult.

Stone Arrangements

There were numerous cases of stones around the skull (Figure 5.5). This is a common feature of tenth and eleventh century burial practice, but since the practice continued into the medieval period the presence (or absence) of stones cannot be used as a dating tool (Boddington 1996, 38–42; Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 135–36).

Stones were found associated with 53 (29.4%) of the 180 burials excavated. Stones were also recorded in association with twelve of the 109 unexcavated burials that were identified (11%). There were various arrangements of stones, but because of the amount of disturbance and truncation that had taken place it is not always possible to be certain if what survives is what was intended originally. This is particularly the case with stones placed either side of the skull and those placed by the ankles.

The most common practice was to place several stones round the head. The purpose of this appears to have been to support the skull in an upright position. In general, the stones were fragments of limestone or lias, presumably pieces of building stone that were at hand. However, in a few instances rounded cobbles (probably sourced from the River Severn nearby) were used, either on their own or in conjunction with other types of stone. There were also occasional examples of sandstone.

Although the most common arrangement of stones was for several to be placed around the head, there were four or five examples of 'pillow stones' where there was just one stone below the skull. There were also at least three examples of 'ear muffs', where one stone was placed either side of the skull. It is possible that there were several more examples of this particular arrangement but, as stated above, the amount of disturbance makes this uncertain. As noted above, in one instance lumps of slag had been used as 'ear muffs'. There were few examples of stones being placed above the body. In two cases where stones were placed above the skeleton the body was that of a neonate ([478], [961]). However, there was one example where a large stone appeared to have been deliberately placed on the upper legs, just above the knees [727]. The skeleton, which was that of a juvenile, was not in a coffin but the stone had stopped earth from accumulating beneath its position.

There were two cases where worked stones had been used. In the first, a fragment of column shaft <SF 35> was used as an 'ear muff', while in the second a fragment of sandstone column was one of several stones placed round the head [392]. In both cases the burials were in the latest 'level' so the fragments of worked stone could have come from one of the Anglo-Saxon Cathedrals on the site.

In addition to the re-used fragments of building stone, in one burial a broken grindstone <SF 22> was used to support the skull, with one piece overlying the neck. It was made of sandstone, *c*.280mm in diameter, with a central hole 75mm in diameter. It was smooth round its circumference but the upper and lower surfaces were very rough. There were also examples of fragments of quern being included in the stone arrangements.

It is clear that placing stones adjacent to the body and burial in a coffin were not mutually exclusive rites. On average, 22.4% of burials had stones associated with them. Of these 62% were in coffins. This proportion was higher in the upper 'levels' of burials, probably because there was less disturbance or truncation. However, it is also possible that

it represents a change in the use of the rite over time.

Charcoal Burials

No charcoal burials were found. Although charcoal was found mixed up in the soil through which a couple of burials in the south-west quadrant of the Chapter House were cut, this was not contained within a clear grave cut. It is possible that there was one or more charcoal burial below the limit of excavation that had been disturbed by the digging of later graves. According to James Holloway, high-status urban minsters are likely to have cemeteries with the highest numbers and percentages of charcoal burials (Holloway this volume). At St Oswald's Priory, Gloucester, the charcoal burials were concentrated round the church (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 202–3). If the same was true at Worcester, it is possible that the Anglo-Saxon church lies some distance from the Chapter House.

Because of the apparent prevalence of charcoal burials in high-status cemeteries (Buckberry 2007, 124), the absence of this rite at Worcester is striking. However, no charcoal burials have yet been recorded from any site in Worcestershire, so it is possible that this particular grave variation was not practised in this area. An alternative explanation for the charcoal, such as disturbance of a pre-cemetery hearth or pit, should therefore be considered.

Burial Position

By far the largest proportion (over 50%) of the burials where it was possible to accurately record the burial position had both hands resting on or crossed over the pelvis. The next most frequent position was for one arm to be extended by the side with the other hand resting on the pelvis (25%). Other burial positions included:

- both arms by the sides.
- arms crossed on the chest.
- arms crossed at the waist.
- one arm on the waist with the other by the side.
- one arm on the chest with the other on the waist.
- one arm on the waist with the other on the pelvis.

The most popular burial positions were prevalent throughout, while there was most variety of position among the 'Level 2' burials. There did not seem to be any pattern in the spatial distribution of the different positions. There was also no clear distinction in burial position between coffined and uncoffined burials apart from those with one arm by the side and the other hand on the pelvis. This position was twice as likely to be found in coffined burials. However, because of the small number of skeletons surviving where it was possible to record the burial position (only 76) this information must be treated with caution.

Grave Markers

There were few indications that any of the Anglo-Saxon graves had been marked. In one grave there was a mortar layer 20mm thick [499] overlying the grave fill. This grave was not fully excavated but its dimensions (1.10m east-west by 0.45m northsouth) suggest that it was that of a child. The mortar was not the full extent of the grave; it may have been a marker layer or possibly the bedding for a stone slab. The grave has been assigned to the

latest ‘level’ of burials since it was not cut by later interments. It is thus possible that any stone marker was removed when the Chapter House was built. Since, from its size, this is thought to be the grave of a child it is unlikely to have been dug after the construction of the Chapter House.

Although several stake-holes were found in the course of the excavation, it has not been possible to relate any of them to a specific grave to suggest that they may have held marker posts. The post-holes found were associated with either the construction of the Chapter House in the early twelfth century or with alterations carried out in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The amount of inter-cutting of the burials would suggest that any grave markers that might have existed were of wood rather than stone and were no longer extant when the later graves were dug. Any markers for the latest phase of burials, some of which might have been of stone rather than timber, could have been removed when the site was cleared for the construction of the Chapter House.

Finds

Few items were found that could be classified as grave-goods. An iron barrel padlock <SF 57> and its key was found between the knees of a young adult female who had been buried in a coffin. Examination of the padlock by Sonia O’Connor (University of Bradford) showed it to be locked and intact. The corrosion crust incorporated mineral preserved remains of pupa cases, consistent with burial in close association to a rotting body, and some areas of dark, smooth corrosion. Radiography revealed details of the lock’s mechanism, shape and decoration. Iron padlocks of this form often have a protective coating of copper alloy. For example the padlock from Coppergate, York, was braised and plated with copper alloy (Ottaway 1992). The presence of plating might have accounted for the areas of smooth corrosion, but there was no indication of copper corrosion (often green) amongst the suite of iron corrosion products and no plating or braising was visible in the radiographs. These smooth areas were the result of corrosion forming in the humid void of the coffin, rather than against other material such as soil or body tissue. The presence of mineralised textile on the key shank suggests that the body was clothed or in a shroud when placed in the coffin (O’Connor *pers. comm.*) although no other remains of textiles were found associated with the burial.

Two similar padlocks are known from Hereford Cathedral, although here the padlocks were placed in the pelvic region (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 178). The examples from Hereford are probably eleventh century in date, and a similar date can be suggested for the Worcester example since it came from the latest ‘level’ of burials. Two further examples of barrel padlocks in graves come from St Mary Graces, London, although these are medieval in date. Again the graves were those of adult women and it possible that the padlock was used as a symbol of chastity.

In addition to the more highly decorated padlock found in York, a barrel padlock very similar to SF 57 was found on the Deansway excavations to the north of Worcester Cathedral (Dalwood and Edwards 2004, 387, fig. 234:89). This came from period 7 of the site, dated to the late ninth to late eleventh century.

Other possible grave goods included a cylindrical glass bead 5.5mm in diameter and 3mm long <SF 58>, found adjacent to the backbone of the skeleton of an adult [710]. A fragment of a lead cross, 33mm high <SF 4>, may be the remains of a mortuary cross (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 88–93). However, there is no sign of an inscription on it. It was

found in the soil [011] overlying the burials, not within a grave, but it could have originated from a grave disturbed by a later interment. It is clearly not a fragment of window came as there are no slots for the glass.

Only one pin, which could have been a shroud pin, was found <SF 15>. This was made of copper alloy, 24mm long by 1mm in diameter and with a round head. It came from the bottom of a layer of mortar [078] abutting the central pillar. This mortar was probably deposited following alterations to the base of the pillar in the thirteenth century and the pin could have come from a burial that was disturbed by this activity.

Although several coins were found, the majority of which are probably Roman, none seemed to have been placed deliberately in relation to a skeleton. However, half of a medieval silver penny <SF 48> came from the fill of the grave of an adult male [545]. It is possible that this represents a burial following the construction of the Chapter House, although there were no finds to suggest that it was that of a priest.

Discussion

The excavation within the Chapter House has provided much useful information about the possible location of the Anglo-Saxon cathedrals of Worcester. It has also shown that the suggestion that the Chapter House was an adaptation of an Anglo-Saxon rotunda is unlikely. There was no evidence, either in the form of foundations or robber trenches, to show that there was a building on this site before the present structure was started *c*. 1100. If the outer curving wall is the remnant of an Anglo-Saxon rotunda then its core had a greater diameter than the present Chapter House, *i.e*. of over 17 metres. The foundations of the Chapter House, which are of slag interleaved with layers of mortar, are not the same as those of the outer curving wall, which are of rubble and mortar. However, they are the same as those of the west end of the crypt of the Norman cathedral (Guy 1994, 4). The walls found externally may therefore be later than the Chapter House and have abutted it. Unfortunately the junctions of these walls and the Norman building lie below the fourteenth century buttresses and are inaccessible.

Instead of providing information about an Anglo-Saxon building, the excavation unexpectedly revealed a pre-Norman cemetery. Although St Oswald re-founded the cathedral as a monastic foundation in the later tenth century, the presence of skeletons of women and children as well as men would indicate that this was not the monks' cemetery. For much of the medieval period, the cathedral maintained almost a complete monopoly on burial within Worcester (Baker and Holt 2004, 242–4) and this was probably true of the period before the Norman Conquest as well. This site therefore represents part of the lay cemetery and full analysis of the skeletal material will tell us a great deal about the general population of Worcester in the later Saxon period. Further analysis will be undertaken when the skeletons have been studied in order to see if patterns can be discerned in the distribution of coffins and stone arrangements which reflect age and/or sex.

Excavations undertaken in 1970 to the south of the Chapter House and in the south slype from the cloisters revealed *c*.35 skeletons (Clarke 1980, 133). Unfortunately the whereabouts of the report on this skeletal material and of the bones themselves is unknown. It is recorded that part of the monks' cemetery was sequestered in 1069 for the outer bailey of Worcester Castle (which lay south of the cathedral) (Mason 1990, 122), and these burials may therefore have been those of monks. The 1999 excavation outside the Chapter House located part of a wall aligned east-west which was cut to the north by the curving wall. This wall may have been a dividing wall between the lay cemetery to the north and the monastic

cemetery to the south but could also have been a retaining or terrace wall. The presence of these cemeteries would place the Anglo-Saxon cathedrals further north, probably under the present building.

The analysis undertaken to date suggests that the evidence from Worcester can be paralleled at other later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Further study of the material will allow a better understanding to be gained of burial practice in an Anglo-Saxon urban context and may highlight regional variations.

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6. Material Symbolism and Death: Charcoal Burial in Later Anglo-Saxon England

James Holloway

Church cemeteries from the middle and late Saxon periods are dominated by unfurnished, extended inhumations, either with or without coffins. However, not all late Saxon burials are unelaborated; a number of variant burial practices exist, seldom found in large numbers, but found at many sites. One of these variations involves the presence of charcoal in the grave. In many such 'charcoal burials,' the grave is lined with a layer of wood charcoal, although in others charcoal is found above the body. This paper will argue that participants in the burial rite in late Anglo-Saxon England attached a series of symbolic associations to charcoal and used these associations to construct particular identities for the dead. By integrating archaeological and textual evidence, it is possible to examine what some of these associations may have been and how they were experienced in the funerary process.

In the last half-century, the study of funerary practice in Britain has undergone a series of important transitions. Beginning with approaches focused on using material culture to extrapolate social or ethnic identity (Lucy 2000, 11–14), the emphasis moved to the ways in which funeral practice expressed and enforced power relations (Parker Pearson 1982). More recent work has concentrated on the trauma and psychological impact of death (Tarlow 1992, 1999). The work of Howard Williams has focused on the series of events culminating in and during interment as a process centred on memory and forgetting (Williams 2006). However, few of these innovative approaches have been applied to the study of early medieval Christian burials until recently, perhaps because the omnipresence of Christianity in modern British culture means that some archaeologists view Christian practice as familiar or unproblematic. Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts summarized this problem in their 1985 report on excavations at the church of St Mary-le-Port, Bristol: 'The general impression, including the 'official' view of central government and local museum sponsorship, was that we know all we needed to know about Christian burial, that in any case they had no finds, and that there was an element of impropriety in disturbing or even looking scientifically at interments of a community whose religious beliefs and mortuary practice were at least nominally those of our own day' (1985, 128).

Additionally, early Anglo-Saxon burials provide a range of grave-goods which have been the subject of detailed study (Lucy 2000); by contrast, even elaborate churchyard graves can seem spare. Lastly, there are many logistical difficulties in excavating churchyards (Kjølbye-Biddle 1975). These factors together have contributed to the neglect of later Anglo-Saxon Christian cemeteries (Lucy and Reynolds 2002, 3–7).

This situation has begun to change; Roberta Gilchrist and Barney Sloane (2005) incorporated diverse methods of analysis into a pioneering work on death ritual in medieval

monasteries, although it concentrates mainly on the period from *c*.1050 onwards. Andrew Reynolds (1997, 2002, 2009; see also Buckberry and Hadley 2007) has done important work on execution cemeteries in the late Saxon period. Jo Buckberry and Dawn Hadley (2005) have outlined the main characteristics of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, while research by Annia Cherryson (2005 and this volume, see also Buckberry this volume) has drawn attention to burial locations outside churchyard cemeteries in the middle and late Saxon periods.

Despite these important new studies, many still view the dominant late Anglo-Saxon burial rite as homogeneous. In fact, however, excavation within 'normal' late Anglo-Saxon churchyard cemeteries has revealed a significant diversity of burial practice (Hadley and Buckberry 2005). Most such cemeteries contain at least some graves with variant burial practices. For example, some graves include objects or dress accessories such as the probably ninth-century finger-ring excavated from a grave at St Mary Major, Exeter (Graham-Campbell 1982). Arrangements of stones are also found, placed around the head, at the feet or alongside the body. The late Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Raunds Furnells, Northamptonshire, contains a large number of this type of burial (Boddington 1996; see also Craig and Buckberry this volume). Also found in late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are layers of various substances in the base of the grave. Burials on lime linings are known, for example from St Andrew's Fishergate, York (Stroud and Kemp 1992, 157); layers of sand are known from Old Minster, Winchester (Biddle 1969, 322) and layers of chalk and mortar from the cemetery of St Nicholas Shambles, London (White 1988, 18). In a large group of burials, the body or coffin is associated with a layer of charcoal. These 'charcoal burials' have been discussed within the context of individual sites (*e.g*. Scott 1996), but rarely studied as a group.

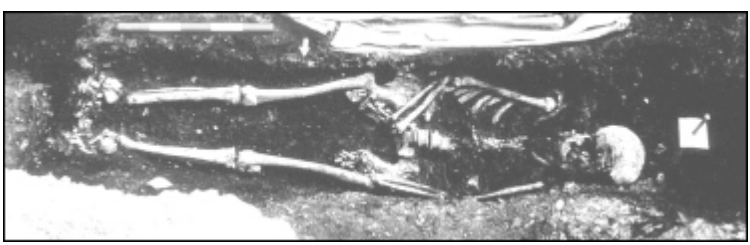

Figure 6.1: Charcoal burial from Staple Gardens, Winchester. Courtesy of Winchester Museums Service.

What is a charcoal burial?

In 1856, Thomas Ross, mayor of Hastings, was excavating to locate the foundations of what he believed to be a medieval tower on East Hill. He encountered a number of burials on layers of charcoal, but was unable to determine their date. 'Such an unusual mode of interment I have not seen anywhere explained' (Ross 1857, 367). In 1874, J.T. Fowler excavated the site of the former chapter house of Durham cathedral (Fowler 1880; 1883), becoming the first excavator to identify clearly medieval charcoal burials. The late Saxon graves below the first chapter house and the post-Conquest graves associated with it contained a wide variety of burial practices, including seven charcoal burials. This picture of diversity in burial rites was completely at odds with the common view of Christian burial as generally simple and unfurnished. Interestingly, Fowler does not seem to have regarded

the charcoal lining as particularly notable, or the inclusion of artefacts as unusual. Most of Fowler's writing about the site is devoted to history or biography, with very little effort to understand the significance of the rite – it is discussed in one brief footnote in a thirty-five page report (Fowler 1883, 245).

Charcoal burial has become a widely recognized type of early medieval burial; the term refers to any grave in which a layer of charcoal is found in association with the body. Charcoal burial may include a coffin, in which case the charcoal is normally found below the coffin. In addition to a layer on the floor of the grave, charcoal may be found packed around the sides of the coffin, as at Old Minster, Winchester (Biddle 1969, 321), or on top of the coffin, as in some of the burials at York Minster and St Mary Major, Exeter (Philips and Heywood 1995, 87; Henderson and Bidwell 1982; Cathedral Close excavation archive EXEMS: 24/2005). Some burials, both with and without coffins, have been found 'encased' in charcoal (Dawes and Magilton 1980, 16), with charcoal on all sides of the body. The thickness of this layer can vary; examples from Oxford ranged from 5 to 8 cm, while examples from York were up to 15 cm thick (Hassall 1973, 270; Philips and Heywood 1995, 87).

In addition to the presence of charcoal in the grave, these graves may incorporate a number of other burial practices. Charcoal layers have been found in stone-lined graves at Durham Cathedral (Fowler 1880, 388), or in graves with 'pillow' or 'earmuff" stones at Hereford Castle Green (Shoesmith 1980, 24). Other substances may be found mixed with the charcoal, such as grain at Hereford Castle Green and sand at Winchester Old Minster (Shoesmith 1980, 27–8, Biddle 1969). In some cemeteries, the practice of charcoal burial appears to correlate with other funerary rites. At both the Old Minster and New Minster, Winchester, for example, the excavators suggested a correlation between charcoal burial and the presence of 'elaborated' coffins with iron fittings (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 229–30).

Charcoal samples from several sites in England have been analysed (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 229; Heighway and Bryant 1999, 218; Shoesmith 1980, 39; Cathedral Close excavation archive EXEMS: 24/2005). The wood is primarily oak from mature trunk or branch wood, with small quantities of other species such as maple. No evidence has been found at any charcoal burial site to suggest the charcoal is residue of burning *in situ*.

A number of practices found in early medieval or medieval burials are similar to charcoal burial in some ways. High medieval burials sometimes contain a layer of ash below the body. In these burials, the layer of ash is usually found inside the coffin. This ash contains elements of charcoal, animal and plant matter, pottery and other domestic refuse, demonstrating that it may have 'originated from a domestic fireplace of some form' (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 121–2). Small patches of charcoal are sometimes found in the fill of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon graves, perhaps originating from a fire lit in or beside the grave (Adams 1996, 165). Carbonised wood is also found in some early medieval English burials; this probably results from the planks of the coffin being charred before burial. An example of this type was initially mistaken for a charcoal burial at Wharram Percy, North Yorkshire (Mays *et al*. 2007, 242). The misidentification demonstrates that these burials can sometimes be difficult to distinguish from charcoal burials, as both may initially appear as a black stain (Rodwell 1981, 150). Although these practices all involve the presence of charcoal or other burning residue within the grave, they lack the layer of charcoal associated with the body that constitutes charcoal burial.

Burials in charcoal are also found outside England. Examples are known from Scotland, Ireland and Scandinavia, as well as from seventh-century contexts in Francia (Young 1984, 125). These Frankish burials often contain charcoal, ash, burnt stone or other traces of so-

called *feux rituels*; some of these contain full layers of charcoal similar to those found in British examples (Young 1975, 118). The most notable charcoal burials from a continental cemetery are probably the examples from Lund, Sweden, where approximately 100 burials are known from four eleventh-century cemeteries, a total rivalling the densest concentrations of charcoal burial in England. In a particularly striking instance, two neighbouring churchyards, approximately ten metres apart, have very different burial practices. Over 100 burials containing hazel sticks are found in the so-called K3 cemetery, with only a small number of charcoal burials. By contrast, around 25% of all inhumations in the neighbouring D3 cemetery contain charcoal, and there are no burials with hazel sticks (Blomqvist and Mårtensson 1963; Cinthio 2002). It has been suggested that the Scandinavian and Irish charcoal burials are inspired by or related to the English rite (Cinthio 1997; Hurley *et al*. 1997). However, ethnicity may only be one aspect of the rite; it has been suggested that this practice is linked to divisions in social status (Andrén 2000; Holloway 2008).

Distribution, chronology and the historical context of charcoal burial

Accurately identifying charcoal burials can be difficult. At St Bertelin's church, Stafford, for example, excavator Adrian Oswald unearthed a large area of black deposit in the cemetery. He identified this as the decayed remains of a large wooden cross of unusual design (Oswald 1955). Martin Carver has disagreed with Oswald's identification, believing this patch of organic material to be indicative of a charcoal burial (Biddle 1986, 9–10), with the body either having been removed or no longer surviving. Identification of charcoal burials from excavation records can also be difficult. Some excavations fail to distinguish between burials with a layer of charcoal and burials which merely contain some quantity of charcoal (*e.g*. Scott 1996, 31). Lastly, in cemeteries which have been heavily disturbed fragmentary charcoal burials are more likely to be identified than contemporary burials without charcoal, because of the distinctive appearance of the charcoal layer. This was the case at the cemetery of St Mary Major, Exeter, where excavators recorded patches of charcoal, as little as 50cm along one dimension without any associated bone as the remains of disturbed charcoal burials (Cathedral Close excavation archive EXEMS: 24/2005). Similarly disturbed burials without charcoal or human bone do not appear to have been recorded. This effect may lead to overrepresentation of charcoal burials in some cemeteries. Additionally, if charcoal burial correlates to high status, it may have been more frequently found in some areas of the cemetery than in others. The percentage of charcoal burial found in an excavated area may therefore not represent the proportion within the cemetery as a whole. These problems of identification must be borne in mind when dealing with charcoal burial sites, particularly sites with less comprehensive reporting.

Over 300 charcoal burials are known from over 35 cemeteries in England. Figure 6.2 shows the location of these sites. In most cases, burials come from known late Anglo-Saxon churchyard cemeteries such as St Peter's, Barton-upon-Humber, Lincolnshire (Waldron 2007), or the Old and New Minsters at Winchester (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992). Some burials come from cemeteries not associated with any known church, such as the burials observed during work at Exeter Castle (S. Blaylock, *pers. comm*.).

Charcoal burials are found in churches of all types. In the highest rank of churches we find institutions like the Old and New Minsters at Winchester, large churches intimately connected with the West Saxon royal house. The cathedrals of Durham and York were similarly important in their regions. Less magnificent but still important are churches like St

Oswald's, Gloucester, founded by a West Saxon princess, 'the principal church established at the highest level of patronage available in Mercia' (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 7). Smaller sites such as St Mark's, Lincoln or St-Helen-on-the-Walls, York, served smaller communities or congregations; they do not appear to have been major sites of patronage or pilgrimage.

In general, the highest numbers and frequency of charcoal burials are found in high-status urban minsters. Just over 15% of the tenth- and eleventh-century burials at Winchester Old Minster contained charcoal, and approximately 27% of all excavated burials from the same period at Winchester New Minster (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 231). Approximately 22% of the burials excavated at Durham Cathedral chapter house, believed to be tenth and eleventh century in date, contained charcoal, while 15% of York Minster's excavated ninth-toeleventh century burials were charcoal burials (Fowler 1880, Philips and Heywood 1995). Around 10% of the Anglo-Saxon burials investigated at St Oswald's Gloucester contained charcoal, but in some periods between *c*.900 and *c*.1120, the proportion was as high as 30% (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 202). Around half of the excavated burials from the late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at St Mary Major, Exeter, contained charcoal, but they may have been over-represented because of the bias toward their identification discussed above (Henderson and Bidwell 1982, 154). Bearing in mind the difficulty of determining whether the number of charcoal burials within an excavated cemetery is representative of burial practice at that cemetery in the late Anglo-Saxon period, it appears that higherstatus churches typically have proportionally high numbers of charcoal burials. Smaller churches such as St Mark's, Lincoln or St Helen-on-the-Walls, York, tend to have lower percentages of charcoal burial overall (Dawes and Magilton 1980, Gilmour and Stocker 1986, Hurst and Rahtz 1987).

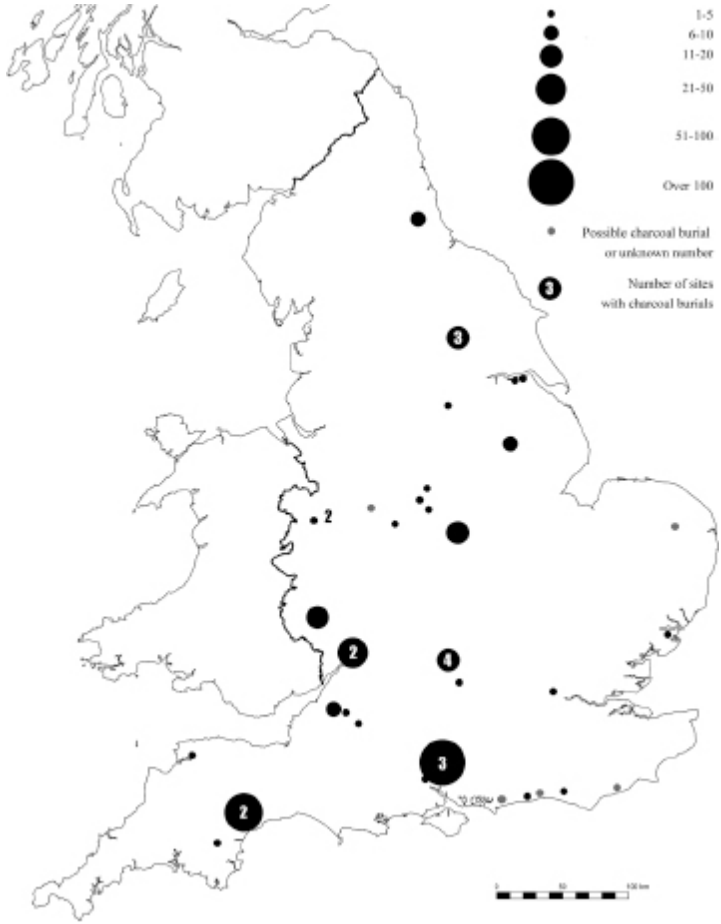

Figure 6.2: Distribution of English charcoal burial sites

Geographically, charcoal burials are densest in the south and south-west, with no or very few examples in East Anglia, the southeast and the northwest. Several towns have multiple sites with charcoal burials: four cemeteries in Oxford contain examples, three cemeteries in York, three in Winchester, two in Exeter, two in Gloucester, and two in Shrewsbury.

It is difficult to determine whether the apparent patterns in the distribution of charcoal burial – notably the high concentration in Wessex and the gap in East Anglia and the southeast – are the result of an actual variation in local burial practice or of differential excavation across different areas of the country. Some high-status churches that might therefore be expected to contain high numbers of charcoal burials, such as Canterbury Cathedral, have never had their cemeteries properly excavated (Blockley *et al*. 1997, 18). East Anglia generally lacks excavated high-status late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Distinct regional networks of churches do seem to have existed, so regional variations in burial practice are not impossible (Blair 2005, 371).

Over 300 charcoal burials have been excavated in England; around twenty of these have been radiocarbon dated. For most sites, carbon-dating gives a range of dates centred on the

ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries (Shoesmith 1980, 27; Scott 1996, 40–1; Hassall 1973, 271; Dodd 2003, 417–23; St Oswald's archive GLRCM: 1975.41). Some date ranges include possible dates as early as the late eighth century, such as examples from Christchurch and St Aldate's, Oxford (Dodd 2003, 421), and as late as the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, such as All Saints, Oxford, St Helen-on-the-Walls, York and York Minster (Dodd 2003, 422; Dawes and Magilton 1980, 16; Hurst and Rahtz 1987, 58; Philips and Heywood 1995, 89–91).

Textual and architectural evidence in general supports the late Saxon date suggested by radiocarbon dating. The burials at Durham, for instance, are unlikely to be later than the foundation of the church in 995, and the burials at St Guthlac's, Hereford, must predate the destruction of the minster and its relocation outside the city in the mid-twelfth century (Whitehead 1980). Prominent churches, for which historical records exist, are thus somewhat easier to date than smaller churches such as St Mark's, Lincoln, where the history of the site is unknown prior to the twelfth century (Gilmour and Stocker 1986, 6). However, some examples, notably those from monastic sites, are much later than radiocarbon dates from other sites (Lambrick and Woods 1976, 205; Guy 1979).

Overall, charcoal burials produce dates consistent with the entire period of late Saxon and early post-Conquest churchyard burials, with most coming after *c*.900 and probably before *c*.1100. A small number of charcoal burials occur in a few sites in the high medieval period, such as the Dominican friaries at Oxford and Gloucester (Guy 1979; Lambrick and Woods 1979, 205), but the heyday of the rite is the tenth and eleventh centuries. This wide date range has some important implications, discussed below.

Interpreting charcoal burial

Individual excavation reports have discussed charcoal burial, generally using the charcoal burials from the Old and New Minsters at Winchester as the point of comparison (*e.g.* Heighway and Bryant 1999, 202). In general, interpretations of charcoal burial have been divided into two groups. Many archaeologists have proposed functional explanations for the inclusion of charcoal. Normally these explanations are connected with its adsorbent properties. Patrick Ottaway (1982, 131) believed that charcoal packing was 'probably intended to absorb bodily fluids.' This explanation has appeared in a number of other discussions of charcoal burial (Thompson 1979, Dawes and Magilton 1980, Hadley 2001). Other functional explanations have included the idea that charcoal was intended to mark the location of the grave (Fowler 1880), perhaps to protect against future intercutting, or that it was intended to prevent the body from decaying (Richards 2002, 164). In fact, in a way, charcoal burial has both preserved and marked the grave, as seen by the enhanced visibility of the fragmentary charcoal burials at St Mary Major.

A second group of writers has focused more on the symbolic elements of charcoal burial, viewing it more as a ritual or magical act than a pragmatic one. The most developed of these arguments is the interpretation of Victoria Thompson (2004, 118–22), who identifies the charcoal as being associated with ash. In the early medieval period, ash was an important symbol of penitence, a symbolic connection which continues today. Thompson cites the writings of the tenth- and eleventh-century homilist and hagiographer Ælfric of Eynsham, who drew a contrast between the 'clean' penitential ash given on Ash Wednesday with the earth of the grave (Skeat 1966, XII, 16–58). Sulpicius Severus, hagiographer of St. Martin of Tours, wrote in the late fourth century that when the saint was about to die he laid himself on a bed of ashes (Roberts 1894, 23). Ælfric was familiar with this story, and his

own life of St. Martin includes numerous references to ash; Martin performs miracles with the aid of penitential ash, and on his deathbed admonishes his followers that 'it befitteth not a Christian man save that he die in dust' (Skeat 1966, XXXI, 1356). Apart from the deathbed ash scene, none of Ælfric's references to ash appear in Sulpicius's writings, which indicates that Ælfric had a familiarity with the significance of ash that did not derive solely from his source.

Other symbolic interpretations have also been proposed. Jacob Kieffer-Olsen (1993, 188) has suggested that charcoal in Danish charcoal burials represented a desire on the part of the mourners or officiants to create a more comfortable resting place for the deceased. Christopher Daniell has suggested a similar explanation for English examples (Daniell 1997, 158). Ragnar Blomqvist and Anders Mårtensson connected Swedish examples with the pious desire for the soul's salvation (Blomqvist and Mårtensson 1963, 54). The reasoning for these conclusions is seldom explained in any detail; most simply present their explanations as if they should be obvious, presumably because of symbolic associations the reader is assumed to understand.

Another common approach to charcoal burial, as with almost any burial rite, has been to view it as representing social status, usually high social status (Fleming 1993, 26). As has been seen, charcoal burials at Winchester appeared to correlate with elaborate coffin-fittings (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992), suggesting that recipients of charcoal burial in this cemetery were wealthy. It is also true that cathedrals and royal minsters such as those in Winchester, Gloucester, York and Durham tend to have high percentages of charcoal burial when they have any at all. Burial in late Saxon England involved, among other things, a financial transaction. Leases and wills attest to payments relating to burial from at least the end of the ninth century, with *sawelsceatt* or 'soul-tax' being paid to the church (Blair 2005, 437, 446; Thompson 2004, 113–4; Tinti 2005). Expenditure on additional burial rites such as charcoal burial, over and above the basic fee, may indicate an additional service provided for those who could afford it.

The charcoal in charcoal burials does not seem to be hearth residue, suggesting that it was purchased or made for the purpose. Woodland resources in the late Saxon period were intensively managed, and there are a number of placenames suggesting charcoal manufacture. Examples include Coleford in Gloucestershire, Coldridge in Devon, Coldean in East Sussex, and Coldred in Kent (Watts 2004, 149). Large landholding minsters presumably received charcoal from their estates, while smaller churches might buy it for specific purposes. In either case, it indicates at least some expense. This expense implies that charcoal burial was generally performed for wealthy or high-status people. However, even within a generally high-status context, the rite must have had a specific function or set of meanings.

In fact, although they have generally been discussed separately, the functional qualities and symbolic associations of charcoal are not necessarily opposed; in fact, they are likely to be related. Ian Hodder and others have argued that 'when objects are used as signs, the relationship between the object and that which it signifies is often not arbitrary' (Hodder and Hutson 2003, 60; Miller 1987, 109; Tilley 1999, 265); that is, that the possible symbolic associations of an object are derived from, connected to or constrained by its physical properties or uses in its social context.

One physical property of charcoal likely to attract attention would have been its adsorbency. Charcoal's porous structure gives it a high internal 'surface area,' accepting admolecules into the tiny pores in its structure. In this way, charcoal, like other porous carbons, acts like a 'solid sponge' (Byrne and Marsh 1995). Classical medical texts record

the use of charcoal to treat a variety of diseases, and today 'activated' charcoal, which has been treated to increase its porosity, is used to absorb contaminants in water (Derbyshire *et al.*1995, 228–30; Cheremisinoff and Ellerbusch 1980, 1–4). Karen Milek has studied the use of charcoal and ash in medieval Icelandic domestic contexts; these substances were laid on floors to absorb moisture and odour-causing particles (Milek 2006). There is no evidence to suggest this custom in England, but charcoal and ash were a part of everyday life; their adsorptive properties must have been well known.

Layers of charcoal in graves may be connected to the use of other dry, powdery substances as grave linings in this period: some contemporary graves contain ash, chalk, mortar or sand (White 1988, 18; Blair 1999, 38). Sand is found mixed with the charcoal in a small number of charcoal burials (Biddle 1969, 322). Normally, however, charcoal is not found mixed with other substances, although burials on other types of layers may be found in the same cemeteries, for example at St Nicholas Shambles, London (White 1988). These substances may also have been used to give the floor of the grave a clean, dry appearance, preventing the mourners from seeing the deceased lowered into what one article memorably called 'the slime and mire' of a damp grave (Hawkes and Wells 1975, 122). Because of its adsorptive properties, applications in cleaning, and dry texture, then, charcoal may have had symbolic associations with cleanliness and purity.

The connection between charcoal and penitence might seem more tenuous. Ash was a powerful symbol of penitence in the early medieval world, and penitence was increasingly becoming associated with death in both English and continental liturgy (Paxton 1990, 135; Thompson 2004, 67–70); penitential psalms were sung at funerals. St Martin's death on a bed of ashes, after a series of miraculous episodes involving ashes, is clearly penitential. Although charcoal is not ash, the two are clearly related. However, if charcoal was desirable only for its similarity to ash, it is hard to imagine why it was used instead of ash; charcoal production is much more difficult and timeconsuming, and ash would have been plentiful.

Some other characteristics of charcoal must also have been thought relevant, perhaps its black colour. Charcoal appears as a comparative in some Old English texts. For instance, an Old English homily on the fate of the soul after death describes devils as *sweart swa col* ('as black as charcoal'). Charcoal here is used as an extreme case of blackness; the same passage contrasts the black devils with angels who are *beorhtre Þonne sunne* ('brighter than the sun') (Willard 1935, 38–40). In a more prosaic context, an Old English medical text instructs that a salve be boiled until it is *swa sweart swa col* (Cockayne 1961, 333).

Ælfric describes ash as '*clene*,' and we have seen that charcoal, because of its uses in removing odours and moisture, may have been similarly associated with cleanliness. Contemporary texts include a number of references to 'clean' burial (Thompson 2004, 85, 93, 104). Whitelock translates this *clænes legeres* (lit. 'clean grave') as 'Christian burial' (Whitelock *et al*. 1981, 466). Other late Anglo-Saxon legal codes use terms such as *gehlagodre legerstowe* ('consecrated burial') to deny proper burial to similar offenses (*e.g*. I Edmund 3: Whitelock 1981 *et al*., 63). If charcoal and ash were both associated with cleanliness, it is possible that the penitential properties of ash might also have been extended to charcoal. A substance associated with both physical cleanliness and penitence might be seen not only as making the grave physically clean, but also as suitable for cleansing of the soul or symbolising its cleanliness.

Victoria Thompson, using textual sources and the iconography of grave markers and sculpture, has demonstrated that the grave was the locus of many anxieties in this period. Corruption of the soul was linked to the physical decay of the body in late Saxon symbolism – the bodies of certain saints were said not to decay – and the earth surrounding

the grave was often portrayed as unclean and threatening, filled with vermin which would devour the body (Thompson 2004, 93–169). Along with grave-cut linings such as chalk and lime, and the practice of lining grave-cuts with stones, charcoal burial may have been intended to create a space for the body distinct from the threatening earth which surrounded it. The tenth and eleventh centuries also saw the introduction of rituals for the consecration of cemeteries, which not only functioned to exclude undesirable people from the community of the faithful but to create a sanctuary for the dead. Penitential psalms were chanted and ash was scattered within the churchyard (Gittos 2002). A communal space for the dead was defined by these rituals; was charcoal burial seen as creating a similar space within the grave itself, 'as a testimony that the earth is no more to be put to common use' (Fowler 1883, 245) or to protect the faithful departed?

The consecrated churchyard incorporated individuals into a community of the faithful dead, but for some people additional measures appear to have been necessary. If charcoal can be understood as being associated with concepts such as purity, cleanliness, penitence and protection, what specifically did these associations have to do with the people who were chosen to be buried on a thick layer of it? Were people who received charcoal burial, as Victoria Thompson has argued, people who failed to die 'with decency' (Thompson 2004, 61), or were they using symbols of penitence and cleanliness to express adherence to a religious and social ideal? Does their treatment mark them out as examples of fitting penitence in the face of death or as people whose lives or deaths were seen as threatening?

In order to have a powerful symbolic and ritual meaning, these symbolic associations do not need to have former part of a coherent system of analogies. Metaphors associated with material objects are inherently mixed (Tilley 1999, 263–6), functioning by process of evocation; formal systems of symbolism are less important than what an object resembles to the viewer or reminds the viewer of. Emotional or unconscious responses – a vague, possible contradictory set of feelings and impressions – rather than 'coherent, consistent and rational' sets of beliefs (Tarlow 1999, 47) are generated.

Conclusion: symbolism and identity in charcoal burial

Dated examples of charcoal burial suggest that the rite was in use over much of the late Saxon period. It also survived after the Conquest and into the high medieval period at a reduced scale. The distribution of sites with charcoal burials demonstrates that the rite was not confined to a particular region, although it is more common in some areas than in others. It was not confined to one type of church; cathedrals, small urban churches, and reformed and unreformed houses all have charcoal burials in their cemeteries. However, many cemeteries have no charcoal burials at all, and charcoal burial does not predominate in any cemetery.

Charcoal burial appears to have been an element of a wider vocabulary of rites considered acceptable for some if not all Christians. This rite could have been communicated in a number of ways: in a textual form that has not survived to the present day, perhaps, or by personnel moving between churches. However, general acceptance of charcoal burial as a rite and a broadly shared set of symbolic associations do not necessarily mean uniformity of practice. Early medieval communities may have used the same rite in different ways, to construct and react to different identities.

The meaning of any object is necessarily ambiguous; it is negotiated and enacted by the individuals and communities which create and manipulate it. Furthermore, different groups or individuals may use a substance or an object, even one which has a generally accepted

set of symbolic associations, to create and communicate different identities depending on their social needs. It should not be presumed that lay people passively absorbed and reproduced clerical understandings of mortuary practice. Even if the rite was derived from clerical teaching, lay communities may have experienced and understood it in a very different way, using symbols of penitence or cleanliness to make different social statements.

Different churches served communities which had very different social structures, ranging from aristocratic centres staffed by dedicated monastic or clerical communities and focused on the patronage of magnates or the royal family, like Winchester New Minster or St Oswald's, Gloucester, to humbler rural communities and lesser churches in urban environments, like St Mark's, Lincoln, or St Helen-on-the-Walls, York. The funerals that took place at these churches will have occurred in very different social contexts, and the communities responsible for burial will have had different statements to make and images to convey. The shared vocabulary of ritual practice will have been used by different groups to create and communicate a range of possible identities. Variance in the application of the rite can be seen in a number of sites.

Noticeable clusters of charcoal burials are visible at some churches, such as the group of six at St Mark's, Lincoln (Gilmour and Stocker 1986, 15–18). These clusters may represent family groups or members of some other kind of association. Churches like York Minster, Durham Cathedral and the minsters of Winchester, Gloucester, Exeter, Hereford or Oxford supported communities of monks or canons. These religious communities may have observed different funeral rites from the lay community that shared their cemeteries. The two charcoal burials from Oxford Blackfriars were uncovered in the cloister garth. These burials were dated to the mid-thirteenth century and were almost certainly friars (Lambrick and Woods 1976, 205), apparently practising a rite that by the high medieval period was uncommon in lay cemeteries. However, women and infants also received charcoal burial. At St Helen-on-the-Walls, York, for instance, the only charcoal burial, dated to AD 1140 ± 80, is that of an adult female (Dawes and Magilton 1980, 16). The burials underneath the chapter house at Durham included women; however, all of the charcoal burials were identified as male adults (although Fowler's skeletal sexing is probably unreliable), with the exception of one child burial. Fowler believed these burials to be the members and families of the chapter, which until 1083 consisted of married canons (Fowler 1883, 256–7). Therefore, charcoal burial cannot always have been limited to monks or canons.

Another organisation, which might have had an interest in burying its members according to a particular rite, is the guild. These lay fraternal organisations served a number of social functions, but one important role was to provide for the funerals of members. The first textual evidence for guilds dates to the late Anglo-Saxon period, in the form of guild statutes. Five tenth and eleventh-century guilds have left surviving statutes. Two of these documents are associated with the minster at Exeter (Rosser 1988). The Cambridge guild statute specifies that the guild members are to retrieve the body of a brother who dies outside the district and to attend the body of a recently-dead brother. Similarly, the eleventhcentury Abbotsbury guild statutes specify that guild brothers are to attend the burial of deceased members, and to carry the body of the deceased 'to the place which he desired in his life' (Whitelock 1979, 604–7). Although the guild statutes do not describe any particular burial practice, they provide evidence of an organisation at least partly responsible for the burial of its members. Possibly it was the members of guilds, of religious orders, or of important families, their makeup, number and wealth depending on the location and status of the church, who expressed solidarity or community of identity by providing appropriately 'clean' burials for their dead.

The lack of textual evidence directly related to late Anglo-Saxon funeral rites makes it impossible to know exactly how participants in the rite understood and expressed meaning through charcoal burial. That there was symbolic content of some kind seems clear. Symbolism functions by the process of evocation, positioning the artefact within a web of associations. By exploring what evidence exists for these associations, it may be possible to understand the meanings associated with charcoal. By relating these associations to the distribution of charcoal burial both within and between cemeteries, we may be able to understand how these symbolic meanings were used to express the identities of individuals or groups.

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7. Differentiation in the Later Anglo-Saxon Burial Ritual on the Basis of Mental or Physical Impairment: a Documentary Perspective

Sally Crawford

Introduction

> 'What is considered normal health and what constitutes sickness or impairment are negotiable, and the conventions vary from community to community and within subdivisions of societies, dependent upon class, gender and other factors.'
>
> (Porter 1997, 36).

The study of the concept of the 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' body in the past is a relatively young discipline, and one which is still in the process of developing a framework and an acceptable vocabulary (Bush 1991, 17; Hubert 2000, 8; Devlieger 2000, 166). At the outset, it needs to be stressed that what is at issue in this paper is not disease, illness, or treatment of illness as defined by modern medical practice, but the social response to perceived bodily difference and unhealthiness. Recent studies of social responses to bodily difference have emphasized the extent to which 'sickness' or physical difference is a social construct and a negotiable state within society (Bush and Zvelebil 1991; Hubert 2000; Roberts 2000, 51; King 2005; Metzler 2006). Any physical or mental impairment may be more or less disabling according to lifestyle and cultural responses to that impairment. In her ground-breaking work on disability in a medieval context, Irina Metzler made a compelling case for insisting that 'impairment' (a medical deviation from normal) and 'disability' (a social response to impairment) are not interchangeable (Metzler 2006). So, although there exists a robust literature on Anglo-Saxon medicine and medical practice, this is only tangentially relevant to the discussion of the social impact of physical or mental impairment (see for example Cockayne 1864–6; Rubin 1974; Cameron 1993; Meaney 1992; Crawford and Randall 2002).

Like biological age or sex, bodily 'difference' or impairment may be mapped and quantified by osteoarchaeologists, but the extent to which age, gender or impairment carry 'meaning' within a society is a cultural construct, dependent on the particular cultural processes of that time and place; processes which act to change bodies from being child to adult, neutral to gendered, or 'able' to 'disabled'. However, it is one thing to recognise that, in theory, there is a culturally-defined extent to which different forms of physical and mental impairment may have had an impact on the social status or treatment of the sufferer in the past, and quite another to identify and appraise cultural responses to sickness in the historical and archaeological record.

One approach lies in testing the relationship between mortuary variability and social identity. Given that the disposal of a body is a process which reflects a series of customary

and socially-referenced decisions about where and how the body is to be dealt with, any variations in the mortuary ritual, such as inclusion of grave goods, location, orientation, grave structuring and bodily position should, in theory, be capable of being understood in terms of the social meaning and significance within their community of the person who died, either as a response to their status in life, or as a response to the circumstances of their death (*e.g*. Saxe 1970; Pader 1982; O'Shea 1985). Mortuary variability for the early Anglo-Saxon period, when furnished inhumation or cremation was practiced, has been intensively studied over several decades. These studies have emphasised the extent to which burial variation and patterning in early Anglo-Saxon furnished ritual reflected social status, and have sought explanations for mortuary variability in terms of status, family grouping, gender and age, all of which have been shown to have had a measurable impact on burial ritual (*e.g*. Brush 1998; Crawford 1991; Härke 1990; Lucy 1998; Stoodley 2000). During the period of Final Phase of furnished burial (when the introduction of Christianity was certainly implicated in significant changes to the burial ritual, though the nature of that impact is still debateable), burials reflected the need of an emergent elite to express their status and power, but individual biologically-driven considerations such as sex and age continued to be relevant in the vocabulary of burial (Boddington 1990; Blair 2005; Geake 1997).

While it is relatively straightforward to identify the biological age and sex of an individual, and to test that against the burial evidence to assess the extent to which the biological fact was culturally transformed (were all males buried with gender-related artefacts, for example), identifying physical or mental impairment on the basis of the skeletal record is less easy. Every single body within a cemetery represents an example of someone who suffered a terminal illness or trauma; as Tony Waldron has rightly pointed out, there is no such thing as a 'healthy' mortuary population (Waldron 2007, 129). Furthermore, only a very limited number of diseases and impairments leave any trace on the skeleton (Wood *et al*. 1992; Wright and Yoder 2003). Attitudes to impairment may vary within a culture, especially in times of stress. Two examples will illustrate this point. In early medieval Irish writings, the agnatic kin group were expected to care for the sick and mentally impaired (Patterson 1994, 278–9). The violently insane might be tied up by their kin, but the kin were not liable for the behaviour of such people. If their 'insane' relatives threw stones, for example, neighbours were supposed to avoid the stones, and could not ask for compensation if they were hit. However, though kin and indeed the king had a responsibility to defend and look after the insane, when it came to paying an enemy in hostages (whose fate was usually slavery or execution), it was understood that the feeble were the most likely candidates to form part of the payment (Patterson 1994, 278–9). Studies of witch trials from the early modern period have shown that it was women in weak, dependent social and economic relationships who were usually accused of witchcraft, and that physical infirmities might lead to such a position of dependence (Thomas 1971, 678). Notwithstanding these problems, recent research into the earlier furnished cemeteries has successfully highlighted links between 'bodily difference' (trauma or deformity in the body which would have been visible and evident to the burying community) and burial ritual (Lee 2006; Crawford 2007a).

Unfurnished burials from the later Anglo-Saxon period have been less intensively studied than their earlier furnished counterparts in terms of mortuary theory and the impact of social positioning in the burial ritual. This comparative neglect has been due to a combination of factors, particularly a lack of excavated sites, compounded by an inability to date unfurnished later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, though both these issues are being resolved,

not least with a series of important publications of later Anglo-Saxon excavated cemeteries (see Hadley 2000; Buckberry this volume). The comparative absence of grave goods in burials from the eighth century onwards has also fostered an impression that burials in later Anglo-Saxon England were relatively undifferentiated, an impression firmly refuted by recent research which has demonstrated the actual diversity in later Anglo-Saxon burials in terms of their associated artefacts, location, body posture and grave fittings (Thompson 2004; Hadley 2000; Buckberry 2007). The 'normal' location of burial grounds is also more complex than might at first appear. Excavations at rural sites which have been given radiocarbon dates, for example Chimney Farm and Yarnton (both in Oxfordshire) have shown that not all seventh to tenth century Anglo-Saxon cemetery sites were based on a church, though there is no reason to suppose that these orientated, largely unfurnished burials with neatly-laid supine bodies were not considered honourable and acceptable (Crawford 1989; Hey 2004; Buckberry this volume). The first reference to consecrated ground for burial did not come until the early tenth century (Blair 2005, 464), and archaeological and documentary evidence coincide to suggest that, from this time, burial away from churchyards was no longer acceptable for Christians. The tenth and eleventh centuries also saw an increase in the number of 'deviant' and 'liminal' burials, possibly the victims of judicial execution, within the Anglo-Saxon burial record, located away from the church but in prominent locations, often re-using earlier monuments in the landscape, and comprising one or more disordered, damaged or contorted bodies (Reynolds 1998; 2002).

Recent reviews of the archaeological evidence have stressed the importance of studying later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries within the framework of current mortuary theory (especially Hadley 2004; Gilchrist and Sloane 2005). The importance and relevance of gender and age as factors in determining mortuary treatment in later Anglo-Saxon England have been highlighted (Hadley 2004; Blair 2005; Buckberry 2007; Crawford 2007a and b). Age, gender, family status and 'deviant' behaviour played a part in determining the way in which a later Anglo-Saxon corpse was disposed of: could physical and mental impairment in life also have been factors influencing the treatment of the body after death?

The concept of separate or segregated burial for certain sick people is attested for the later medieval period, in the form of leper cemeteries, though not all lepers were given segregated burial, and 'leper cemeteries' were not used exclusively by lepers (Roberts 1986; Rawcliffe 2006). There have also been tentative suggestions of links between prone burial, perceived deviancy, and physical and/or mental incapacity in the later medieval period (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 153, citing Bain 1998, 1054). Individual cases of later Anglo-Saxon burials which hint at a causal link between bodily impairment and burial treatment have also been identified. The 'special' treatment of the disabled man in grave 5074 at the late Anglo-Saxon cemetery site at Raunds, Northamptonshire, is a well-known example where physical difference (the man suffered from impairment to his knee) led directly to unusual treatment of the body by the buriers: the man's knee was supported by stones in the grave, a specific burial feature related to the physical impairment (Boddington 1996, 42; Williams 2006, 110; Hadley this volume). It may or may not be relevant to his physical impairment that his burial was also located near a boundary of the cemetery (Craig and Buckberry, this volume).

Disease and disability, however, may not have been the reason for any different burial treatment, and some skeletons which show evidence of disease or trauma were not given archaeologically visible 'special' treatment (Thompson 2004, 122–3; Hadley this volume). In her paper in this volume, Dawn Hadley has evaluated the connection between osteologically visible impairments and the burial ritual, which, though not providing a

consistent picture, indicates that for some sufferers, impairment in life was a factor in their mortuary treatment. In what follows, I hope to complement her paper by teasing out some of the documentary evidence for a cultural context which might indicate where and why mental or physical impairment may have had an influence on social identity and related mortuary treatment in the later unfurnished (post-Conversion) cemeteries, effectively from the later seventh century to the Conquest (see, for example, Reynolds 1999). The documentary references touching on burial and physical or mental impairment are not copious. Inevitably, given the limitations of space, not all the material has been given its full context, and the chronological span is broad. However, the purpose of this paper is to act only as an introduction and starting point for a discussion of archaeological findings within the framework of the documentary evidence; is there written evidence for a cultural context for burial exclusion or differentiation, and should archaeologists expect to find the burials of the physically and mentally impaired within that context?

Impairment and Social Status in Later Anglo-Saxon England

Some indication of the ways in which various impairments might affect the status of a person within Anglo-Saxon society is given by two law codes, one an early seventh-century code issued by Aethelbert, and a revised version of the same code issued by Alfred in the ninth century (Attenborough 1922, 9–17, 87–93). These list compensation for injury. In the decree of Aethelbert, the compensation for a person's death was set at 100 shillings. The most disabling injury, worse than death on this scale, was castration, which was valued at three times the wergild. If the eye and a foot of a servant had been destroyed, full value was to be given (does this suggest that these injuries rendered a servant useless?). The loss of a foot or eye was compensated for at 50 shillings, while a disabled shoulder was valued at 30 shillings, and loss of an ear at 25.

Why should these injuries be rated as so detrimental and incapacitating? Further law code evidence gives some explanation. A late seventh century law of Ine set fines for noblemen and commoners who neglected their military service, and II Canute 23 decreed that 'the witnesses, as they wish to obtain the favour of God and of their lord, shall declare that, in bearing testimony on his behalf, they are speaking the truth, in accordance with what they saw with their eyes and heard with their ears' (*seo gewitnysse þæt on Godes helde 7 on his hlafordes, þæt heo him on soðre gewitnysse si, swa heo hit eagum ofersæh 7 earum oferhyrdon…*) (Attenborough 1922, 53; Robertson 1925, 187). In order for a free man to participate in adult life, then, he needed to be able to ride a horse or walk, to carry weaponry, and to see, hear and speak. The scale of compensations in the laws of Aethelbert relate directly to a man's ability to undertake his responsibilities as an adult within his society, as set out in the laws. To be unable to carry out these duties through physical or mental impairment would have inevitably had a depressing effect on a man's status, as the scale of compensation indicated.

Though the documentary sources, especially the hagiographical tales, offer many cases of physically and mentally impaired individuals, they give little specific information about the relationship between status and impairment. As might be expected, the hagiographical examples suggest a heavy dependency on the care and solicitude of others amongst those whose physical and mental impairments were so serious as to require saintly intervention. It is a rare child or adult who came to a saint for a cure in the narratives of the church in England, for example, without the support of one or more helpers and carers (Crawford 1999, 39). There are, however, hints within the law codes that this lack of independence on

the part of the impaired might have carried with it a loss of adult status. The clearest example comes from Alfred 14, which stated that: 'If anyone is born dumb or deaf so that he can neither deny nor confess his wrongdoings, his father shall pay compensation for his misdeeds' (*Gif mon sie dumb oðde deaf geboren, þæt he ne mæge synna onsecggan ne geandettan, bete se fæder his misdæda.*) (Attenborough 1922, 71). The loss in status of the (adult) person with impaired hearing and speech was a direct result of the way in which Anglo-Saxon society was ordered around a principle of oath-swearing and declarations of allegiance. A person who could neither hear the charges against him, nor declare his innocence due to physical impairment, was obliged, under this law code, to remain in a position of dependency on his father, essentially retaining the legal status of a child or servant.

This differentiation between *social* ability and inability is expressed again in another context in Alfred 17, which states that 'if anyone gives his *unmaga* into another's care, and he dies in their care, he who nurtured him shall exculpate himself of the crime, if anyone accuses him' (*Gif hwa oðrum his unmagan oðfæste, 7 he hine on ðære fæstinge forferie, getriowe hine facnes se ðe hine fede, if hine hwa hwelces teo.*) (Attenborough 1922, 72–3). *Unmaga* has been translated in this context as referring to an orphaned child or other helpless person (Attenborough 1922, 195), and it is certainly used in this sense in the Old English translation of the Book of Esther, where the *unmaga* child Esther went to live with Mordechai (whom the Old English translator turned into Esther's uncle) because 'her father and mother were dead' (Bosworth and Toller 1898, 1121). *Unmaga*, however, also embraced a range of meanings encompassing social and physical weakness. The word and its near synonyms group those who were socially, economically or physically weak (Kossman 2007, 69). The law of Alfred was not necessarily referring exclusively or even particularly to children. The term for a child in Alfred's codes was invariably *bearn*, (*e.g.* code 8:2, code 3, and code 9: 65), so there is no reason to think that the law actually intended the meaning 'child' to be the primary idea conveyed here. *Maga* means 'strong, able, competent, having means' (both physical strength and material wealth are implied in its use); *unmaga* is the opposite – one who is not strong, able or competent, and without means (Clark Hall 1984, 228; Lieberman 1960, 478). *Maga* and *unmaga* occur most frequently in surviving Old English texts as a formulaic paired antonym – the strong and the weak (Kossman 2007, 68; Mincoff 1933, 50, cited in Kossman 2007). *Unmaga* is certainly not a direct equivalent of the modern 'disabled', but it encompassed a recognition of some personal quality or condition – slavery, juvenility, lack of wealth or physical weakness – which led to a social lack of ability and poor status. Alfred's code refers to anyone (adult or child) who has an impairment or weakness (physical, mental, social, age-dependent, material) which meant that they were in a position of dependency within adult society. This code on dependents followed shortly after the code on those with deafness and dumbness, who would qualify as *unmaga* in this sense.

Sin and the Impaired Body

An extra dimension in the reconstruction of social responses to impairment in post-Conversion Anglo-Saxon England is the extent to which some behaviour of the afflicted person (or the parents/carers of the afflicted person) might have been viewed as responsible for their illness or physical difference. As Roy Porter noted, 'maladies carry different moral charges' (Porter 1997, 36). Sufferers might bear the blame for their own illnesses, dependent on cultural understanding of the mechanisms of disease transmission, and

cultural explanations for the presence of impairment. The theological minefield of the relationship between sin and physical impairment was one which vexed Anglo-Saxon religious scholars, just as it did their later counterparts (see Montserrat 2005; Kroll and Bachrach 1986 and Rawcliffe 2006 for medieval attitudes to sin and illness, and *e.g.* Meaney 1992; Lee 2006 for specific discussion of the Anglo-Saxon period), and it was a factor, for example, in contemporary explanations of King Alfred's famous disease (Pratt 2001, 90). The perceived 'cause' of his bodily impairment was considered important in the narrative of the disease/s of King Alfred, which insisted that his suffering was not caused by spells and witchcraft, nor by the ill-will of the devil, nor by fever or piles, but rather it was presented unequivocally as a gift of God, in response to Alfred's pious prayer to be tested by a (non-visible) affliction (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 90). The extent to which religious interpretation of a link between (bad) behaviour and subsequent sickness may have affected burial practice is an important strand in the narrative of physical difference and social status in later Anglo-Saxon England, where the church, arbiter of moral behaviour, was, in theory, in control of the burial ritual.

There is clear evidence from Asser's *Life* of King Alfred that visible deformities and injuries posed a much greater threat to social status than illnesses or infirmities which left no mark on the body (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 89). King Alfred's mysterious illnesses were presented by his biographer as 'noble' rather than weakening. The symptoms were carefully and divinely selected to leave him without any physical blemish 'whereby he would be rendered useless and contemptible' (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 89). An explanation for the 'positive' response to Alfred's diseases might be sought in the extent to which Alfred's (and Asser's) views of disease and bodily infirmity were shaped by the works of Gregory the Great (Kershaw 2001, 216). Gregory argued in *Pastoral Care* (a work which Alfred included amongst his selection of books for translation) that no man could rule who could not first control himself. Perceived in this way, Alfred's illnesses demonstrated his extraordinary and heroic power to control himself. Though suffering greatly, his self-control was such that no-one could detect his illness, nor did his illness stand in the way of his great works, and of course it was only because Asser described in such detail his suffering that Alfred's private, (because successful), attempts to control his illness could be fully brought into the public domain. His physical suffering, as Paul Kershaw has argued, 'functioned as much as a mark of authority as a sign of weakness' (Kershaw 2001, 208). Mysterious, causeless, and externally invisible, King Alfred's sickness was portrayed as a 'noble' illness to add to his catalogue of virtues. Described as having been 'transfixed by the nails of many tribulations', his illness was expressed in hagiographical terms which could leave the reader in no doubt of Alfred's saintly qualities (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 101).

The readings of King Alfred's illnesses make it clear that responses to illness and impairment in Anglo-Saxon England were complex, and were dependent on a range of factors. The written culture of later Anglo-Saxon England was heavily influenced by the Bible and by the teachings of significant religious thinkers. On the subject of illness, *Leviticus* XXI 17–20 was quite specific – no man could rule who possessed any blemish, specifically blindness, eye disorders or skin blemishes. Similarly, Gregory the Great argued in *Pastoral Care* that physical defects made a man unworthy to hold office, and we have already seen how this relationship between physical appearance and status was considered important in the *Life* of King Alfred, and indeed in the law codes relating to those who were *unmaga*. Alfred's disease was carefully described as a gift of god, but might illness be thought to come as a punishment, rather than as a test? The sixth or seventh century

Lombard laws explicitly associate the occurrence of leprosy, madness or blindness in a bride with sinful behaviour (Rothari's law 180: Skinner 1998, 298). There is nothing so specific in Anglo-Saxon law codes, but in about AD 962 or 963, King Edgar issued a writ explaining to his people why he thought they had been visited by the plague, and what measures should be taken to deal with this affliction. 'In the first place', he decreed, 'he and his councillors are of the opinion that misfortune such as this had been merited because of sin and disregard of God's commands, and especially through the withholding of the tribute which Christian people should render to God by their tithes' (*Ðæt is þonne ærest þæt him þuhte 7 his witum, þæt ðus gerad ungelimp mid synnum 7 mid oferhyrnysse Godes beboda geearnod wære, 7 swyðost mid þam oftige þæs neadgafoles þe Cristne men Gode gelæsten scoldon on heora teoðingsceattum.*) (Robertson 1925, 29). For the purposes of this law code, a firm causal link was made between sin and sickness – hardly surprising, given Carole Hough's suggestion that, although penitentials and secular law were independent until at least the end of the ninth century, the two were 'pulled together' in the late tenth or early eleventh centuries under the influence of Wulfstan (Hough 2000, 139). As a churchman, Bishop Wulfstan's views on the spiritual and physical 'health' of the nation reflected a long ecclesiastical tradition of interpreting sickness in terms of spiritual health, sinfulness and penance (Rawcliffe 2006, especially 48–54).

Although this tradition has a place in Anglo-Saxon homiletic literature, it was by no means prevalent in all Old English documentary sources (Lee 2006, 78). Old English medical texts rarely attach blame in discussing illness. Bald's *Leechbook*, a tenth or eleventh century medical text written in the vernacular, offers remedies for several diseases associated with 'the fiend': *breccseocnysse; weden heorte*; and *feond seocum man* (Cockayne 1864–6, *e.g.* Vol 1 285, 289). Emetics and drinks were recommended, and in each case masses, prayers, or visits to the church were advised, not to relieve the sufferer from sin, but because the cure for the sickness was perceived to lie with God, rather than with the doctor (Meaney 1992, 17). Within hagiographic texts, too, though saints cure illnesses, that did not necessarily mean that the 'cause' was sin (Skinner 1998, 302). Bede described the case of a man who visited the monastery of Abbess Æthelhild: 'a guest came [to the monastery], who in the hours of the night used to suffer severely from sudden visitations from an unclean spirit…after supper…he was suddenly seized by the devil, and began to call and shout and grind his teeth, and the foam came from his mouth, and he began to thrust his limbs with convulsive movements. As no-one could hold or bind him, an attendant ran and knocked at the gate and told the abbess' (*uenit illic quidam hospes qui solebat nocturnis saepius horis repente ab inmundo spiritu grauissime uexari…post caenam in lecto membra posuisset, subito a diabolo arreptus clamare, dentibus frendere, spumare et diuersis motibus coepit membra torquere; cumque a nullo uel teneri uel ligari potuisset, cucurrit minister at pulsans ad ostium nuntiauit abbatissae*. *Ecc. Hist*. III.ii) (Colgrave and Mynors 1991, 249). The abbess had a box containing dust which had soaked up water used to wash St Oswald's bones. The moment the box was brought into the demon-possessed man's presence, he became silent and dropped his head, as though he would sleep, then after a while he sat, up, sighed heavily and said: 'Now I am in my right mind and have recovered my senses' (*Modo' inquit 'sanum sapio; recipi enim sensum animi mei*. *Ecc. Hist*. III. ii) (Colgrave and Mynors 1991, 249). The man was given some of the dust to keep, the priest recited the prayer again, and the fiends left the man, never to return.

This account is interesting in a number of ways. Clinically, the guest's symptoms match well with an epileptic fit, but, given the knowledge-base available at the time, the affliction is categorised as devil-induced madness, outside the normative framework of health or ill-

health. Comparative anthropological studies indicate that mental illness is a particularly sensitive form of 'difference', both in terms of being a sociallyconstructed condition, defined by assumptions about culturally normal behaviour, and in terms of blame being attached to mental difference (Brooks 2000, 9). What is notably absent from Bede's description of this illness is any sense that the patient had brought the disease on himself through his own sinfulness. Bede's sufferer was not ill; he was the innocent victim of a tormenting demon. Ordinary men could not be expected to withstand such an evil; only King Oswald's intervention could drive out the fiend. The patient left the monastery with an amulet of saintly dust to ward off the devil, but with no stain on his own moral character.

What is apparent in the documentary sources is that writers of medical texts, writers of law codes, and writers of homilies did not work in isolation from each other, and nor did they regard their work as belonging to separate disciplines. The analogy between the suffering of the king and the suffering of his country drawn in the *Life* of King Alfred (Pratt 2001, 90), and the link between physical health and a healthy political state which is present, though not explicitly articulated, in Aethelred's laws, emphasis this point. In VI Aethelred cap 52, the formulaic structure of law consciously evokes analogies between the role of lawgivers and judges and Anglo-Saxon medical doctors. Aethelred and his councillors argued that the law, far from being fixed for all, should be exercised with consideration for the individual case: when judging men, the stronger should pay more heavily, because 'the strong and the weak are not alike, nor can they bear a like burden, any more than the sick can be treated like the sound. And therefore, in forming a judgement, careful discrimination must be made between age and youth, wealth and poverty, health and sickness, and the various ranks of life…' (*for þam þe se maga 7 se unmaga ne beoð na gelice, ne ne magon na gelice byrþene ahebban, ne se unhala þe ma þam halum gelice; 7 þy man sceal medmian and gescadlice toscadan, ge on godcundan scriftan ge on woroldcundan steoran, ylde 7 geogoþe, welan 7 wædle, hæle and unhæle, 7 hada gehwilcne*.) (Robertson 1925, 106–7). The Old English text of this edict has the rhythm and alliteration of poetry: '*ylde 7 geogoþe, welan 7 waedle, haele 7 unhaele, 7 hada gehwilcne*', suggesting that the wording was perhaps following an old, or common, formula, and indeed similar phrasing occurred in the tenth century manuscript of Bald's *Leechbook*: 'always consider when you are giving potent medicines what the strength is, and the condition of the patient, whether he is strong or vigorous and may easily cope with strong medicine, or whether he is delicate and frail and weak and cannot stand the medicine. Apply the medicine according to the condition of the patient, because there is a great difference between the bodies of men, women and children, and in the strength of the daily labourer and the leisured, of the old and the young and of those used to hardships' (*for þon ðe micel gedal is on waepnedes 7 wifes 7 cildes lichoman, 7 on þam maegene þaes daeghwamlican wyrhtan 7 þaes idlan þaes ealdan 7 þaes geongan 7 þaes þe sie gewin þrowungum…*) (Cockayne 1864–6 Vol 1, 83–85).

Several Old English sources offer specific instructions about the categories of people who were to be denied burial in consecrated ground, and neither physical nor mental impairment were specifically mentioned in these sources. Some were excluded from church burial not because of their behaviour in life, but because the unfortunate circumstances of their deaths meant that they had died without confession or absolution: women who had died giving birth (and their unbaptised babies), strangers, and men who had died in battle were all candidates for exclusion from Christian burial grounds (Daniell 1997, 103). The exclusion of this latter group of people, whose untimely deaths were through no fault of their own, caused unease and discussion. In a letter, Anselm discussed the problem of

whether the bodies of the drowned and those who had suffered a violent death could be included in the main cemetery, and concluded that 'the corpse of those who have been surprised by death' (so that they did not receive the last rites) 'can be placed in the church and buried in the cemetery, if it is done in such a way that their blood and fluids do not soil the church' (Lauwers 2005, 172). Medieval cases of burial practice for technically excluded bodies were recorded, such as the burial of the Vicomte d'Aubusson, who died on a raiding party in 1031. When the Abbot of Uzerche was accused by Bishop Jourdain of giving a Christian burial to the Vicomte d' Aubusson, the Abbot argued that, on the contrary, he had been buried 'sur l'autre rive' by his vassals, without a cleric present – so he was buried at the margins of the Abbey, and was 'neither received nor buried' by the church (Lauwers 2005, 173). Geoffrey of Mandeville recorded a similar example of a knight excommunicated for pillaging the goods of the Abbot of Ramsey, who died in the church of the Templars in London. To avoid burial exclusion, his body was placed in a lead coffin and suspended in a tree in the garden of the old temple in London (see Round 1892, 223–226). Both these examples fall outside the chronological or geographical scope of this paper, yet the burials they describe are the product of theological problems similar to those faced by ecclesiastics in the later Anglo-Saxon period, and are certainly worth bearing in mind both to give a possible context to bodies with evidence for weapon trauma found at or on Anglo-Saxon cemetery boundaries, and equally interestingly for those whose skeletal remains suggest a violent death, but whose burial shows no apparent differentiation.

Law eleven of the so-called 'Laws of Edward and Guthrum' castigated 'wizards or sorcerers, perjurers or those who secretly compass death, or vile, polluted, notorious prostitutes', who were to be 'driven from the land and the nation shall be purified; otherwise they shall be utterly destroyed in the land' (Attenborough 1922, 109). Being driven from the land would cause such miscreants to become strangers elsewhere: though the point is not made specific, the implication must be that they would not receive Christian burial. This was certainly the intention in the late ninth century law of King Alfred which stated that an oath breaker who will not submit to being disarmed and placed in prison for 40 days, and makes an escape, will be 'banished, and excommunicated from all the churches of Christ' (Attenborough 1922, 65). That this excommunication would lead to exclusion from normal burial was clarified by a subsequent law of Aethelstan, which stated that 'anyone who swears a false oath and it comes out into the open, he shall never again have the right to swear an oath; and he shall not be buried in any consecrated burial ground when he dies, unless he has the testimony of the bishop, in whose diocese he is, that he has made such amends as his confessor has prescribed to him' (*Ond se ðe manað swerige, 7 hit him on open wurþe, þæt he næfre eft aðwyrþe ne sy, ne binnon manum gehalgodum lictune ne licge, þeah he forðfore, buton he hæbbe ðæs biscopes gewitnesse, ðe he on his scriftscire sy, þæt he hit swa gebet hæbbe, swa him his scrift scrife*.) (Attenborough 1922, 141). By being denied the right to swear an oath, a man who fell foul of this law would effectively be rendered *unmaga* in legal terms, just like the deaf and dumb man of Alfred's law code.

Other groups of who were to be excluded because of their behaviour were: clerics who would not stay celibate (Edward; I Edmund 1); men who had illicit unions (Wihtred 3); those who refused to pay church dues (1 Edmund 2); and 'homicides, adulterers and those who have sex with nuns (unless they make amends)' (1 Edmund 4).

A further category consisted of those who would not learn the Paternoster and the Creed. This decree of Canute is in six parts. The first insists on the need for everyone to learn the Paternoster and Creed: 'we enjoin that every Christian man apply himself until he can' (*we lærað þæt ælc Cristen man geleornige þæt he cunne huru rigtne geleafan arigt*

understandan) (Roberston 1925, 171–3). The second and third part explain why these prayers are so important to know, and explain that, by reciting these prayers, a person is praying from his heart and showing 'true belief in God'. The fourth part asks how anyone can pray from the depths of his heart unless he has true belief in God, and the fifth responds to the question by asserting that 'after his death he cannot rest in hallowed grave among Christians or here in this life be entitled to receive the sacrament'. This does not say categorically that anyone who will not/cannot learn the Paternoster or Creed will be excluded from Christian burial, but the final part of the code: 'he is not a true Christian who refuses to learn it' (*ne he ne bið we Cristen ðe þæt ne geleornian nyle*) sets the logical sequence that a refusal to learn the prayers is unchristian, and those who are not Christian (who refuse to learn the prayers) cannot be buried in a Christian burial ground.

Within the Wulfstan's *Canon Law* collection, it was recorded that the penalty for those who 'bring about their own death by any neglect whatever' was that no remembrance of them may be made in the offering, and for those who commit suicide, 'nor may their bodies be brought down to their grave with psalms'(Cross and Hamer 1999, 113). The Canon Law collections were part of a long tradition of law-making within the church, and represent the latest recension of attempts to 'correct persistent infractions, or to confirm ideal modes of conduct' (Cross and Hamer 1999, 29). As such, they represent the church's idea of proper conduct within Christian society. Suicides, or those who neglected their lives to the point of death, were to suffer significant religious penalties. However: 'If a man tormented by a devil is not able to do anything except run to and fro in all directions, and kills himself by whatever cause, prayers are to be said for him if he had previously been a religious. If through despair or through some fear or other, or from unknown motives, we leave this judgement to God, and do not venture to pray for him. It is not permitted to say masses for him who has of his own will killed himself, although it is permitted to pray for him and to distribute alms' (Cross and Hamer 1999, 113). Though this statement may be considered equivocal in terms of the fate of the body – masses cannot be said, but prayers and alms may be distributed – there is careful ambivalence about the extent to which the (sinful) self-murder meant that the culprit was outside the church – 'we leave this judgement to God'.

The disposal of stillborn and unbaptised children also caused concern (Lauwers 2005, 172 and 169). The archaeological evidence for infant burial in the later Anglo-Saxon period suggests differentiation, both by zoning of infant burials close to church walls from the tenth century, and in the presence of infant burials in secular settlement contexts from the early Anglo-Saxon period to at least the ninth century (Boddington 1996, 96; Crawford 2007a; Buckberry this volume; Cherryson this volume). Comparative evidence from early medieval Irish documentary sources offers the possibility that impaired babies might not even find their way into the archaeological record at all: the *Life* of Colman of Land Elo recorded the birth of an Ui Neill boy, born blind. His mother ordered the death of the infant, who was taken to a marsh, but was miraculously discovered and given to Colman to rear (Heist 1965, cap. 34). Though this miracle story parallels the Hebrew Bible story of Moses in the bulrushes, it is telling that, for the Irish account, blindness was the impetus for the baby's abandonment. The harsh classification of unbaptised dead babies as outside the Christian church led to debate. The problem of unbaptised dead babies and their mothers may have been particularly acute at the period of Conversion, since ecclesiastical decrees may have been in conflict with non-Christian practice. Surviving Old English documentary evidence is silent on the subject, but comparative early medieval Irish documentary sources indicate that Irish pre-Christian practice was that women who died in childbirth were given special status and honour; Anglo-Saxon burials of women who apparently died in childbirth

(with the infant skeleton still *in utero* or placed close to the body) have yet to be fully researched (Fry 1999, 182–3; Lee 2006; Crawford 2007a).

Though there were, then, conditions relating to the lives or deaths of the deceased which determined that their bodies would not be buried on hallowed ground, in all the extant categories of legal exclusion from Christian burial in later Anglo-Saxon England, there is no specific mention of bodily impairment as a cause for exclusion. This said, it is possible to suggest that certain impairments might lead sufferers to come into conflict with the law, particularly where those impairments made it difficult or impossible for the afflicted to carry out adult duties. The emphasis in Canute's decree on learning the Paternoster, for example, was on choice and behaviour: there is no question here about *ability* to learn (or recite) the prayers, (though the opening statement in the law recognises that this learning may take some effort), but about *willingness* to learn. Nonetheless, the logic of the law code implies that, unless a person was able to learn and recite the prayers, he had not proven himself to be a Christian. The primary focus of the law is not those with mental or physical impairments, but those who refused to declare themselves Christian, yet, if the letter of the law were insisted upon, those with severe speech or hearing impairments would struggle to fulfil its requirements. Historical and anthropological parallels suggest that the mentally impaired might form a disproportionate number of those falling foul of a law excluding 'witches', strangers and homicides from Christian burial (see for example, Foucault 1967, Covey 1998).

Finally, the documentary sources record the abandonment of impaired bodies without any formal burial at all, and with little likelihood of entering the archaeological record. The impaired bodies in this case are those which were subject to judicial mutilation. Law 10 of 'Edward and Guthrum' decreed that: 'If a criminal who has been mutilated and maimed is abandoned, and three days later he is still alive, after this time has elapsed he who wishes to have regard to his wounds may help him with the permission of the bishop' (*Gif limlaeweo lama, þe forworht waere, weorþe forlaeten, 7 he aefter þam ðreo niht alibbe, siððan man mot hylpan be bisceopes leafe, se ðe wylle beorgan sare 7 saule*') (Attenborough 1922, 107). In the *Translation and Miracles of St Swithun*, recorded by the continental scholar Lantfred, a man was wrongly convicted and mutilated for robbery. The man was scalped, had his eyes gouged out, his hands, ears and feet cut off, his nose mutilated, and then was to be 'abandoned in the open fields, dead in respect of nearly all his limbs, to be devoured by wild beasts and birds and hounds of the night' (cited and discussed in Wormald 1999, 125). Other criminals whose bodies would be abandoned, rather than disposed of, were recidivist thieves of any sex or status, according to the laws of Aethelstan. The fate of the body was not clear in the case of males, but in the case of a free woman, she was to be 'thrown from a cliff or drowned', and, in the case of a female slave who committed an act of theft anywhere except against her master or mistress, 'sixty and twenty female slaves shall go and bring three logs each and burn that one slave' (Attenborough 1922, 151).

Conclusions

Though archaeological evidence includes examples of nonnormative or deviant burial, documentary evidence does not indicate that any bodily impairment found in skeletal evidence associated with such burials would be the *a priori* explanation for non-normative interments.

The implication of the documentary evidence is that some forms of bodily infirmity led to a weaker social position, and comparatively increased vulnerability, within society

(Thompson 2004). Certain types of physical impairment would have automatically confined the sufferers to a weak, dependent status, which has been identified in differential mortuary treatment of children, multiple burials and the burials of the physically impaired in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period (Crawford 1991, 2004, 2007a; Stoodley 2002; Williams 2006). The documentary evidence suggests that, in the context of post-Conversion cemeteries, certain physical or mental impairments, specifically visible blemishes, blindness or deformity, might have been treated as socially disabling, but there is no unequivocal evidence that such disabilities would automatically lead to differential burial ritual. Though documentary sources are unlikely to give a full explanation for the archaeological evidence, the study of social difference in later Anglo-Saxon burial ritual cannot be complete without some consideration of the documented Anglo-Saxon evidence that leadership and social status were positively associated with physical strength and with an unblemished body, and that some physical and mental impairments had a significant impact on an individual's ability to participate as an independent, adult member of later Anglo-Saxon society.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the University of Birmingham for research leave which contributed to the writing of this paper in 2006, and to the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford for a Visiting Research Fellowship. I am very grateful to Dr Julia Crick for bringing the examples of impaired babies in the early medieval Irish sources to my attention, and to Jo Buckberry and the anonymous reviewer for comments on a draft of this paper.

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8. Burying the Socially and Physically Distinctive in Later Anglo-Saxon England

D. M. Hadley

This paper examines evidence for the differential treatment of individuals buried both within and outside of Anglo-Saxon churchyards, *c*.700–1100. In particular, it addresses examples of especially elaborate burial, burials in distinctive and prestigious locations, and, conversely, examples of exclusion from normal churchyard burial. The age and sex profile of individuals treated differently will be discussed, as, in selected cases, will osteological evidence for their life experiences. This paper will also consider how and where those exhibiting 'difference' in terms of health, physical capacity or manner of death were buried. It will be argued that in the later Anglo-Saxon centuries disproportionate numbers of adult males were buried in prominent locations or afforded particularly elaborate funerary treatment, yet adult males were simultaneously more likely to be excluded from normal funerary treatment and from consecrated ground. In contrast to cemeteries of the earlier Anglo-Saxon period, the burials of infants and young children are considerably more numerous in later cemeteries, and are often found in prominent locations, adjacent to or within churches and near to prominent male burials. Finally, the paper argues that although distinctive funerary treatment was sometimes afforded to physically impaired individuals, they were not routinely differentiated from the remainder of the population in death.

Normality in the Anglo-Saxon Churchyard

Churchyard burial began to emerge as an option for members of religious communities, royalty and at least some of the laity from the later seventh century in most parts of Anglo-Saxon England (Blair 2005, 58–73, 228–45), although it probably did not become the norm until the tenth century (Blair 2005, 463–71; Hadley 2000, 209–15). The burials of the later seventh to eleventh centuries are largely west-east aligned, supine and unaccompanied by grave goods (Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 132–43). Yet, while not exhibiting such striking variations as earlier Anglo-Saxon burials, recent research (White 1988, 18–27; Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 222–33; Boddington 1996, 37–48; Hadley 2000; Hadley and Buckberry 2005; Buckberry 2004, 2007; Cherryson 2005) has revealed that later Anglo-Saxon burials were diverse, and included assorted types of coffin and grave linings, including charcoal, and, in the tenth century, were increasingly marked by stone slabs and crosses (Bailey 1980; Stocker 2000). Finally, while grave goods had essentially ceased to be deposited by the early eighth century, later graves occasionally contain dress accessories, jewellery and knives, while good organic preservation sometimes reveals wooden implements and textiles (Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 138–40; White 1988, 24; Rodwell and Rodwell 1982, 312;

Bateman 1997, 117). The significance of some of these variations has been sought in the context of theological debate. Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle (1992, 231) has, for example, written of the potential associations between charcoal burial and penance and humility, while Victoria Thompson (2004, 122–6) has suggested that contemporary ecclesiastical fears of the corruption of the body may account for the increasingly enclosed nature of some later Anglo-Saxon graves. 'Superstitious' belief is another plausible explanation for some grave variations, including the occasional provision of artefacts that may have had a personal resonance for the deceased or which may have had amuletic or apotropaic qualities (such as white quartz pebbles and wooden rods; Bateman 1997, 120; Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 140; Hadley 2009; Gilchrist 2008).

Whatever motives lay behind them, there has been only limited consideration of who was accorded particular forms of burial. Influenced by studies of earlier Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, which have highlighted the frequent correlations between the age and sex of the deceased and particular assemblages of grave goods (Stoodley 1999a, 74–90, 105–18; Lucy 2000, 87–90; Gowland 2006), a few recent studies of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have begun to reveal that the provision of diverse forms of grave furniture do not normally or consistently correlate with the sex of the deceased. They do, however, sometimes become more common with increasing age; for example, it has been demonstrated that at Barton-upon-Humber (Lincolnshire) the graves of older adults (46 years and older) more commonly contained evidence of a coffin than was the case for young adults (13–25 years) and mid-adults (26–45 years) (Buckberry 2007, 123–4). Nonetheless, there are few variations that never occur in infant graves and there is little to suggest that any age group or either sex was routinely denied particular types of provision (Buckberry 2004, 203–12; Hadley and Buckberry 2005, 141–2; Buckberry 2007, 121–5; Hadley in press). The contrast with the funerary practices of earlier centuries is, thus, marked (Hadley 2004, 302–04; Hadley in press). It has long been suggested that conversion to Christianity prompted changes in funerary practices from the seventh century (*e.g.* Meaney and Hawkes 1970: 51–2; reviewed in Samson 1999), although there is little written evidence that the Church actively concerned itself with burial practices (Bullough 1983, 185–6). Accordingly, it is now thought that other factors, such as the emergence of more stable social hierarchies, were equally, if not more, important factors accounting for the transformations in burial rite evident from the seventh century (Boddington 1990). These transformations include a transfer of emphasis away from gender-distinctive grave assemblages, commonly restricted to prime age adults, towards a tendency for similarity of funerary provision that was largely unrelated to age or sex (Stoodley 1999b, 101–06; Hadley 2004, 302–05). In the later Anglo-Saxon period grave variation was probably dictated by a combination of wealth, family status (Hadley 2004, 302–05; Buckberry 2007, 126) and access to learned ideas about appropriate burial form (Thompson 2002). Such ideas are unlikely to have been evenly disseminated throughout later Anglo-Saxon society, and it is, indeed, notable that the greatest concentrations of, for example, charcoal burials and enclosed graves are to be found in the churchyards of major minsters and cathedrals, where both learned ecclesiastical ideas and the people with the wherewithal to respond to them were concentrated (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992; Phillips 1995, 75–92; Buckberry 2007, 119; Hadley in press).

Exceptions to the Norm: Men

Exceptions to the general pattern of burials thus far discussed can, however, be found, especially with respect to burial location and innovative and elaborate grave forms, which

are typically provided for adult males. For example, at both St Oswald's, Gloucester, and Old Minster, Winchester, males were more commonly accorded the most elaborate funerary provision. Among the tenth-century burials in iron-bound coffins, all located very close to the church of St Oswald's, there were eight males but only one female (Heighway and Bryant 1999, 208–15), while at Old Minster most of the 16 burials near to the supposed grave of St Swithun contained adult males, and all of the adults for which sex could be determined in charcoal burials pre-dating the mid-tenth century were males (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 228, 231–3). In both cases it is probable that these male burials were of members of the religious communities of the respective churches, and that, therefore, the form and location of burial was determined by a combination of occupation and the articulation of monastic ideals about burial (Hadley in press). Nonetheless, male burials are also sometimes more numerous in prominent locations in parish churchyards, including among the tenth- and eleventh-century burials nearest to the church, especially on its south side, at Raunds (Northamptonshire) (Boddington 1996, 54–6; Hadley in press). Similarly, exceptionally elaborate funerary provision is typically reserved for males. Examples include a lead-lined coffin from a cemetery radiocarbon dated to between the later ninth and early eleventh centuries at Staple Gardens, Winchester (Kipling and Scobie 1990), a tenthcentury burial placed in what appears to have been a boat at York Minster (Kjølbye-Biddle 1995, 500–05), and the burial under the only decorated grave slab at Raunds (Boddington 1996, 51). At Raunds the burials of ten adult males have been interpreted as indicating distinctive funerary provision. The skeletal remains were notably disturbed (described in the report as 'external bone tumble'), with, for example, the vertebrae dispersed and, in one case, the sacrum displaced over the arm, and it has been suggested that this resulted from considerable putrefaction having commenced within the coffin before interment (Boddington 1996, 36–7, 48). It has recently been suggested that this indicates the protracted nature of funerary rituals for a group of males of apparently high status (Williams 2006, 108), since the burials concerned are located close to the south and east sides of the church in what was presumably a prestigious location, given the concentration there of coffins, grave covers and markers (Boddington 1996, 54–6; Craig and Buckberry this volume).

In contrast, some later Anglo-Saxon burials were differentiated, if not excluded, from normal modes of burial. A disproportionately high number of these were also of adult males, some of whom have evidence for physical impairment. For example, an adult male (inhumation 10) buried just beyond the boundary wall of the eleventh-century cemetery at North Elmham (Norfolk) had an extensively remodelled left tibial head, with bony outgrowths into the knee joint, possibly the result of a penetrating wound (Wade-Martins 1980, 189; Wells and Clayton 1980, 274) (Figure 8.1). This was the only burial in this cemetery with the head placed to the east rather than the west (Wade-Martins 1980, 189). In addition, there were cuts, probably inflicted by a sword, on the cranium, fourth vertebra and right humerus of an adult male (inhumation 171) who had probably met a violent death and who was buried in the boundary ditch of the same cemetery (Wade-Martins 1980, 189; Wells and Clayton 1980, 365–6). Burials thin out towards the edges of the North Elmham cemetery, but there is a cluster of mainly adult male burials near to inhumations 10 and 171, and this is suggestive of differential treatment. However, in the absence of any further striking pathologies, or distinctive grave features or alignments, it is difficult to assess the significance of this cluster of burials; inter-cutting of some of the graves indicates that they were not all contemporary (Wells and Clayton 1980, 249; fig. 192). At Raunds there are three physically impaired adult males located at the limits of the churchyard. These include

a male buried on the northern edge of the churchyard who had a shortened left humerus and shortened and atrophied right femur, with limited mobility in the right knee suggested by destruction at the distal end of the femur and 'fusion of a much distorted patella' (Powell 1996, 120). He had a stone placed in the mouth, in a rite unique in this cemetery (Boddington 1996, 41–2, fig. 25) (Figure 8.2). At the south-eastern limits of the churchyard was a burial exhibiting signs of leprosy (Boddington 1996, 69, fig. 25; Powell 1996, 120) and an individual with a shortened and atrophied left humerus (Boddington 1996, fig. 25; Powell 1996, 118). The latter condition was probably the product of arrested growth deriving from a childhood fracture or infection, with subsequent osteoarthritis in the joint rendering the upper limb largely immobile; this individual also had an 'end stage' osteoarthritic right hip which would have limited mobility (Powell 1996, 118; Craig and Buckberry this volume; Buckberry *pers. comm.*) (Figure 8.3). All three of these individuals were certainly buried within the churchyard, but it is striking that – as far as the skeletal evidence permits us a reliable insight – the three most physically distinctive individuals among this burial population were interred at the very limits of the consecrated ground. Another cluster of unusual male burials has been excavated in the tenthcentury phases of the former monastic cemetery at Ripon (Yorkshire). First, there was the burial of a young adult male with a pronounced distortion of the lower vertebral column, caused by collapse and fusion of the lumbar vertebrae, possibly resulting from spinal tuberculosis, who was buried with the head to the east. Second, there was a multiple burial of three adult males, and, finally, there were three other male burials on diverse alignments (Hall and Whyman 1996, 76–8, 98). The excavators suggest that by the tenth century the cemetery was the burial place of the socially excluded (Hall and Whyman 1996, 123–4).

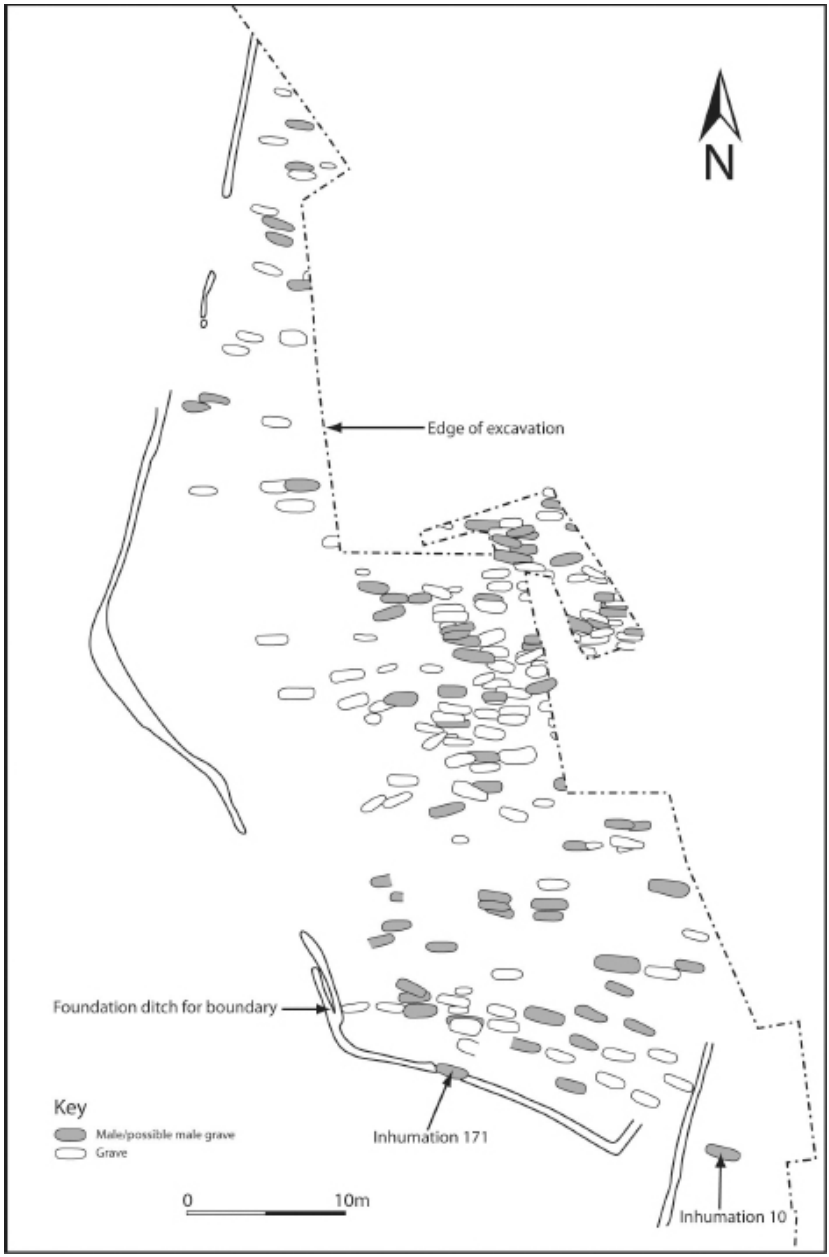

Figure 8.1: Plan of the eleventh-century cemetery excavated at North Elmham (Norfolk). Note the position of inhumation 10 outside of the cemetery boundary, and inhumation 171 in the line of the perimeter foundation ditch. Most of the adult burials that could be assigned a sex in the southern part of the cemetery are males (Oliver Jessop after Wade-Martins 1980, 186).

Figure 8.2: Grave 5218 at Raunds (Northamptonshire) (photographed from the south). This individual, one of three notably physically impaired individuals in this cemetery population, had a stone placed in the mouth, in a rite unique in this cemetery (reproduced courtesy of Northamptonshire Archaeology, Northamptonshire County Council).

Figure 8.3: Grave 5062 at Raunds (Northamptonshire) (photographed from the north). Note the shortened and atrophied left humerus (reproduced courtesy of Northamptonshire Archaeology, Northamptonshire County Council).

Other forms of apparent exclusion from normal funerary provision in the later Anglo-Saxon centuries include burial in ditches. Examples have been excavated at the Cook Street site in *Hamwic* (Southampton, Hampshire) (Garner 1993, 88; Garner 2001, 172–7, 181), the Upper Bugle Street site in Southampton (Cherryson 2005 (Appendix), 77–8; and this volume), Milton Keynes (Buckinghamshire) (Parkhouse *et al*. 1993, 201), Yarnton (Oxfordshire) (Hey 2004, 75, 163), and at Winchester, where two burials dated to *c*.700 were located in the ditch outside the wall which blocked the Roman south gate of the city,

one of which exhibits signs of leprosy and was buried on its side (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 221). Other irregular burials from the later Anglo-Saxon centuries include two apparently isolated male burials in unoccupied and probably marshy ground at The Brooks in Winchester (Scobie *et al*. 1991, 37, 39, 64–5), and burials on the Thames foreshore in London (Ayre and Wroe-Brown 1996, 20; Bradley and Gordon 1988; McCann and Orton 1989). A small number of prone interments among otherwise regular burials are known, some of which suggest that unusual circumstances surrounded the manner of death of the individual interred in this way. For example, a single prone interment, partly buried on its right side, was excavated in a cemetery radiocarbon-dated to the late seventh or early eighth century at Great Houghton (Northamptonshire); the adult male had an un-united arm fracture, likely to have occurred shortly before death (Chapman 2000–01, 17–18, 38). At Cherry Hinton (Cambridgeshire) a prone burial was encountered close to the church. This adult male appears to have been severely burnt, as much of the lower body was missing, and the remaining elements reveal clear signs of charring. He was certainly included among the faithful for burial, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the prone position must have been related in some way to the apparent manner of his death (Ferrante di Ruffano and Waldron n.d., 88–90).

It is striking that the majority of the examples of unusual burial treatment in the later Anglo-Saxon period – for which sex could be assigned and where it is recorded in the relevant published or unpublished reports – occur in the graves of males. The numbers of such burials is admittedly limited, but the proposition that it is a representative sample is supported by the fact that males also predominate among the burials in execution cemeteries, which are the most overtly excluded burials of the later Anglo-Saxon centuries, typically remote from churchyards and contemporary settlement and often on territorial boundaries (Reynolds 1997; Hayman and Reynolds 2005; Buckberry and Hadley 2007). Apparently, males who differed from the norm, or who failed to meet the expectations that society placed on them, were considerably more likely than females to have been excluded or distinguished from the wider community in death (Hadley in press).

In the majority of cases discussed thus far it was either not possible to determine the age of the individual concerned, or such information is not reported in the relevant published or archival accounts. This is especially regrettable in the light of recent studies demonstrating the differential treatment that adults at varying stages of the life course were accorded in death; in this respect, it has been argued, age, as much as gender, is a dimension of social identity (Gowland 2006, 143). Yet despite the deficiencies in the evidence, some suggestive patterns emerge. It is, for example, notable that the males buried in nonnormative fashion are typically younger adults (*i.e*. aged 15–30 years), which mirrors the evidence from execution cemeteries, which overwhelmingly consist of young adult males (Hayman and Reynolds 2005, 232; Buckberry and Hadley 2007, 316). Adult males of this age group were, perhaps, more likely to engage in the kinds of behaviour that resulted in them being excluded from normative burial. However, the range of potential mourners also has to be taken into account, as these are not static throughout the life-course (Gowland 2006, 152), and younger adults may have been more socially mobile and with fewer family ties to ensure burial in regular fashion among the Christian faithful, especially if they had transgressed.

We do, however, have to take care to examine nonnormative burial rites in their appropriate context. Prone burial, for example, may often be indicative of hasty or careless burial, especially at execution cemeteries, however this rite occasionally appears to have been a marker of some status. For example, at Beckery chapel near Glastonbury (Somerset)

six prone burials have been excavated among a group of around 64 mainly male burials probably dating to the eighth century; the cemetery is thought to have served a monastic community (Rahtz and Hirst 1974, 27–34). Prone burials have also been excavated in the cemeteries adjacent to the religious communities of Wearmouth (McNeil and Cramp 2005, 82, 85) and Jarrow (Lowther 2005, 176), while several of the ninth-century burials excavated near to the minster church at Shipton-under-Wychwood (Oxfordshire) were reportedly prone (Blair 1992, 8). Given that prone burial is seemingly most common in the churchyards of major religious communities, especially between the seventh and ninth centuries, it seems improbable that it was a sign of damnation or even simply of careless or hasty burial, and it is more plausible that the rite had some penitential significance. Indeed, two of the prone burials at Wearmouth were furnished with upright stone markers, and one was provided with a stone setting around the head, suggesting that these burials were otherwise normal for this cemetery (McNeil and Cramp 2005, 85; see also Groves this volume).

Figure 8.4: Skeleton 442 from Black Gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This individual had scoliosis of the spine and a range of skeletal markers indicative of paralysis (see p. 110) (photographed from the south) (reproduced courtesy of Newcastle City Council).

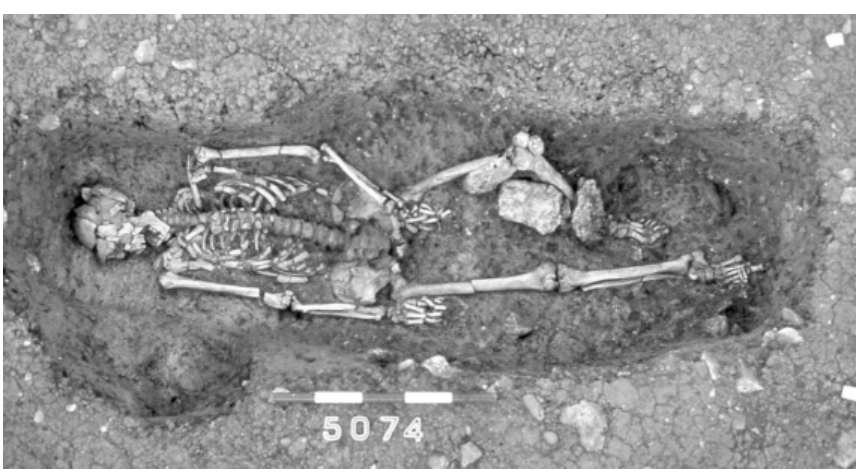

Figure 8.5: Grave 5074 at Raunds (Northamptonshire) (photographed from the south). The left leg

was positioned flexed at the knee in the grave with stones packed around it (reproduced courtesy of Northamptonshire Archaeology, Northamptonshire County Council).

Exceptions to the Norm: Children

A notable characteristic of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries is the high numbers of burials of infants (up to 1 year old) and young children (up to 5 years) in comparison with earlier Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. While taphonomic factors may partly account for the disproportionately low numbers of infant and young child burials in early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Buckberry 2000), nonetheless it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that they were frequently buried in locations other than the communal cemetery, and, indeed, some infant and young child burials have been encountered in settlement contexts (Hamerow 2006, 4–7). The increased visibility of infants and young children in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries has generally been assigned to the influence of the Church (Crawford 1999, 87–9). Indeed, not only are such burials much more numerous in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, but some were in distinctive locations. For example, the practice of burying the very youngest members of communities – typically neonates and young children under the age of 2 years – clustered around the walls of churches has been identified at Raunds (Boddington 1996, 54–5), Cherry Hinton (Ferrante di Ruffano and Waldron n.d., 15) and Tanners Row in Pontefract, (Yorkshire) (Lee n.d). It has been suggested by Andy Boddington (1996, 69) that burial adjacent to church walls had baptismal resonance, as the rainwater dripped onto the graves from the eaves of the church (see also Crawford 1999, 87–8). This is speculative but not inherently implausible, since, as Sally Crawford (forthcoming) has observed, there was a link between baptism and death in the view of St Paul that baptism was not merely rebirth but also resurrection (Romans VI: 3–4), and there are physical links between baptisteries and burial places, such as at Repton (Derbyshire) where the crypt has a drain which may reflect its use for baptism (Biddle 1986, 16). Crawford (forthcoming) suggests that the clustering of infants close to church walls may reflect anxiety about both the availability and efficacy of baptism. Alternatively, the fact that the souls of infants immediately after baptism were regarded as being especially pure (Thompson 2004, 71–2), may have rendered the burial of infants close to the fabric of the church especially appropriate. The burial of infants and young children in special places may also have been a means by which families made specific social and spiritual commitments to their local church. That infants had a special place in the community of the church is reflected in the intra-mural burial of infants. For example, at Raunds the only intra-mural burial is of an infant (a precise age is not given in the report, but analysis by Lizzy Craig suggests the infant was aged 1–3 months) located beneath the arch of the chancel added to the original single-celled church, and near the probable location of the altar (at least before the addition of the chancel to the first church) (Boddington 1996, 8), and the sole burial within the chapel at Burnham (Lincolnshire) is also of an infant (a more precise age is not cited; Coppack 1986, 39).

Infant and young child burials can also be found in close proximity to prominent adult burials. For example, at Raunds two young children (the report states only that they were younger than 6 years, but reanalysis by Lizzy Craig suggests that one was 5–6 years and the other was a neonate) were buried close to the adult male buried beneath a decorated slab, in what has been dubbed the 'founder's grave' (Boddington 1996, 51), while at Great Houghton there was an adult male in a grave with post-holes at each corner suggesting some form of above-ground marker or canopy, which lay around 4 metres from the other

burials of the cemetery with the sole exception of the burial of a child aged 4–5 years (Chapman 2000–01, 16–19). In such cases a familial relationship between the adults and children is possible, but the practice may also have served as both a protective and commemorative strategy. Burial close to an adult burial may have rendered tiny graves less likely to be subsequently disturbed (although that is not to suggest that infant and child burials were never marked above ground: Phillips 1995, 89; Rodwell 2001, 106; Stocker 2007, 286), and there may also have been a desire to afford the very young the care and protection of adult family members in death.

Anglo-Saxon written sources reveal little about contemporary responses to the death of children, either emotional or practical, except in the most general of terms (Thompson 2004, 9–11). Nonetheless, Victoria Thompson (2004, 10–11) has suggested that the deaths of the very young, at least, were regarded as a particular cause for grief, noting that Ælfric of Eynsham distinguishes between the 'natural' death of the old, the 'unripe' death of the young and the 'bitter' death of children. Moreover, she points out that while Anglo-Saxon leechbooks offer little guidance on preventing death, the main exception concerns unborn children (Thompson 2004, 94–5), with charms to protect against stillbirth revolving around rituals to be performed at a graveside, the marital bed and the church altar (see also Crawford 1999, 59). In such contexts, the burial of neonates, infants and young children in distinctive locations, such as within the church, against the church walls and near to prominent adult burials, may conceivably have been part of the emotional and spiritual response to the deaths of the very young. Studies of medieval childhood are generally reluctant to deal with emotions. In part this is because some of the most influential broad-ranging studies of childhood, mainly focussing on the early modern period (Ariès 1962; Stone 1977), presented the Middle Ages as a period with little concept of childhood as a social category and cast parents as indifferent towards their children (Stafford 2001, 260). Yet, there are brief insights into affective bonds between parents and children in early medieval texts, of which the most famous is the manual written by the ninthcentury Frankish noblewoman, Dhuoda, for her 15-year-old son, William, in which both concern to educate her son as he makes his entry into the adult world and also grief for separation from another child, a small baby, are expressed (Neel 1991; Stafford 2001, 262–4). However, such insights are not straightforward guides to parental feelings about their children as they are laden with biblical overtones, and influenced by the uses to which early medieval ecclesiastical authors had put child-rearing, birth, motherhood and parenting as metaphors for power and authority within the Church (Walker Bynum 1982). Archaeological evidence offers an important alternative insight into attitudes to children, and it suggests that in death children were afforded special provision and care through place of burial. While it is difficult to infer affective bonds from this evidence, nonetheless it does strongly suggest that parents in later Anglo-Saxon England were not indifferent to their dead children.

Having said this, not all children were buried in prominent locations within churchyards, and it is plausible that responses to their death and the types of burial they were accorded were shaped by a variety of factors. These doubtless included both the sex of the child and their position within the family, both of which will have had implications for, in particular, capacity to inherit and potential future social advancement through marriage strategies (Stafford 2001, 259–62, 269). The written record implies that infants were regarded similarly, irrespective of sex, and it is arguable that they were 'ungendered' (Stafford 2001, 262), yet the social networks within which families were situated may have placed different expectations on baby boys and girls, and there may accordingly have been a differential reaction to their premature death. It is, thus, unfortunate that the sex determination of sub-

adults from their skeletal remains is unreliable, and other methods, such as the analysis of ancient DNA, are rarely applied (Lewis 2006, 47–55).

In later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries there are much higher levels of both simultaneous and consecutive multiple burial than in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period. The careful re-opening of graves to accommodate subsequent interments, especially of infants and young children, has been noted at many cemeteries (*e.g*. Boddington 1996, 49–53; Rodwell and Rodwell 1985, 82; Bateman 1997; Graham and Davies 1993, 39; Potter and Andrews 1994, 76). Inevitably, in a churchyard context space constraints will sometimes have made the insertion of later burials into pre-existing graves a practical necessity. However, Nick Stoodley's (2002) recent study of multiple burials in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period reveals that they became increasingly common in the seventh century, and multiple burial later occurs even in cemeteries seemingly not constrained for space, such as the seventh- to ninth-century cemetery at Bevis Grave, Bedhampton (Hampshire) where there are at least eleven burials reopened for subsequent interments (Rudkin 2001). Thus, it seems plausible that multiple burials were a meaningful funerary strategy, perhaps linked to the aforementioned emphasis on family status. In earlier Anglo-Saxon multiple burials infants and young children were most likely to be interred with an adult female (Stoodley 2002, 112–13; Crawford 2007), but in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries there is a higher percentage of infants and young children (typically below the age of 7 years) buried in adult male graves (*e.g*. Boddington 1996, 52–3; Rudkin 2001; Waldron 2007, 19–20; and Swales in prep.). In the context of the aforementioned clustering of male burials in prominent locations, and the provision of the most elaborate burials for males, it may be that the burial of infants and young children both within and adjacent to the graves of adult males was another indication of the privileging of adult male graves in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Some adult male graves seem to have become focal points for subsequent child burials, and they may have simultaneously enhanced the significance and prestige of the adult male graves with which they were associated.

Physical Impairment and Funerary Provision

This paper has discussed a small number of examples of the different funerary treatment accorded to physically distinctive individuals, but it is important to recognise that these appear to be exceptional cases. Frequently, individuals with physical impairment were *not* treated differently in death. Examples include an individual aged between 25 and 35 years with a fused vertebral column and ribs at Swinegate in York resulting from ankylosing spondylitis who was buried in a wooden coffin, and thus in similar fashion to other adults in this cemetery. Ankylosing spondylitis is a condition that develops mainly in males and usually in the second or third decade of life, and this person may have spent the latter part of their life bent forward at an acute angle which will have limited mobility considerably (Buckberry 2004, 273–4; Buckberry 2006). Buried apparently normally in the cemetery at Black Gate in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, there is an adult male who appears to have suffered from long-term paralysis of the upper and lower limbs (Figure 8.4). The skeleton has scoliosis of the spine and atrophied ribs, the humeri and tibiae are light and thin with faint or non-existent markings for muscle attachments, which is also the case for the pelvis, and the proximal hand phalanges have U-shaped palmar grooving suggestive of permanent flexion of the fingers, perhaps the result of ulnar nerve paralysis (Boulter and Rega 1993, 46–50). Several possible causes of these skeletal abnormalities have been suggested, including cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy or traumatically-induced post-paralytic

scoliosis (Boulter and Rega 1993, 49–50). Whichever explanation applies, it is apparent that this individual would have required considerable assistance to survive (Boulter and Rega 1993, 49–50). Other physically distinctive individuals buried in normal fashion in Anglo-Saxon churchyards include a female in her late 20s at Jarrow who was of very short stature (1.32m) possibly as a result of 'primordial dwarfism' or Ellis-van Creveld syndrome (Wells 1979; Anderson *et al*. 2006, 500), and an adult male at Tanners Row, Pontefract with the right internal auditory meatus in-filled with compact bone, which will have prevented the passage of the auditory nerve and caused deafness on the right side (Lee n.d; in the absence of the left temporal bone it is, however, impossible to be certain that this individual was completely deaf). Two adult males at Cherry Hinton displayed a form of skeletal dysplasia, with the length of the right humerus of one measuring 79mm less than the left humerus, and in the other instance there was a disparity of 43mm between the lengths of the humeri. One of these males was one of the few in this cemetery to be provided with stones around the head, which is normally taken as a mark of some status (Ferrante di Ruffano and Waldron, n.d.). Finally, the skull of a child aged 3–5 years in the cemetery excavated beneath York Minster exhibited endocranial surface convolutions indicative of hydrocephalus (Lee 1995, 571), which results from abnormal amounts of fluid in the cranium (Cox and Roberts 2003, 115). This condition can be both congenital and acquired, and often results in an abnormally-sized cranium and some level of both physical and mental impairment, although it is difficult to ascertain the extent of this impairment from skeletal evidence (Cox and Roberts 2003, 115). This particular child was buried beneath a carved grave slab and was presumably a member of one of the wealthier families in York, which may have played a significant factor in the child's initial survival (Phillips 1995, 89).

There is also evidence suggestive of concern with the physical suffering of individuals in the grave. For example, the swelling of the left tibia of skeleton 5074 at Raunds suggests that it probably could not be extended and the limb was positioned flexed at the knee in the grave with stones packed around it (Boddington 1996, 42, 44) (Figure 8.5). Howard Williams (2006, 111) has recently argued that this treatment perhaps indicates that for the mourners 'the cadaver still held elements of the deceased's personhood bound into its flesh and bones', and that the provision of stones may also allude to the prospect of salvation and healing at the Day of Judgement. Indeed, Ælfric of Eynsham wrote that at the resurrection 'even if he were formerly lame when alive, yet his limbs will be all healthy for him' (Pope 1967, 432). Such beliefs may have informed the preparation of this burial at Raunds (Thompson 2004, 124). Recent study of later Anglo-Saxon homilies suggests that the corpse was perceived as retaining a degree of consciousness (Thompson 2004, 50–2), and this archaeological evidence suggests that in some cases this belief was acted upon in the preparation of the grave and the corpse for burial.

The presence in later Anglo-Saxon churchyards of individuals with significant physical impairments is potentially important evidence for the nurturing by families and communities of individuals who required considerably greater levels of care and whose contribution to society must have been restricted, at least on a physical level (for early Anglo-Saxon examples see Crawford 1999, 94–6). Certainly, we must be cautious in making assumptions about the level of tolerance, compassion, care or, conversely, discrimination that physically and mentally impaired individuals may have experienced in Anglo-Saxon society (Roberts 2000, 57; Metzler 1999, 63). Nonetheless, at least at the point of interment they were not normally treated any differently from the rest of the population, and it is also significant in this respect that those consigned to burial in execution cemeteries do not demonstrate evidence of significant physical impairments (see,

for example, Hayman and Reynolds 2005; Buckberry and Hadley 2007). Individuals with physical and mental impairments can, of course, make important contributions to society in various ways, and ethnographic studies inform us that we must be careful not to impose modern perceptions of the 'value' of individual contributions onto other societies (Hubert 2000; Murphy 2000, 73–5). While ethnographic parallels indicate that physically impaired individuals may sometimes be treated as akin to criminals (Waldron 2000, 31, 40; Murphy 2000, 74–5), in contrast physical impairments can, in other contexts, be valorised. Indeed, the contemporary written record suggests that in later Anglo-Saxon England disease and the capacity to overcome it could be indicators of authority and a sign of God's intervention to ward off sins such as pride (Crawford this volume; Thompson 2004, 96–8). Given the emphasis placed by later Anglo-Saxon legal and ecclesiastical sources on the importance of appropriate burial for the good of the soul (Thompson 2004, 26–91), this normative funerary provision for the physically impaired seems an important statement about Anglo-Saxon attitudes.

In the later medieval period disease was linked explicitly with sin and this may explain why in that period sick individuals, especially those with leprosy, were frequently buried separately from the rest of the community (Gilchrist 1992). However, in the Anglo-Saxon period such connections between sin and disease do not appear to have been made (Thompson 2004, 96–8; Crawford this volume). The earliest known separate provision for individuals with leprosy in England occurs at the cemetery of St John at the Castle Gate in Norwich, which has been radiocarbon-dated to the late tenth to mid-eleventh century, where 35 individuals had signs of leprosy among a total cemetery population of 265 (Shepherd Popescu forthcoming). Nonetheless, the fact that some of the leprous individuals were provided with stone settings, similar to the provision in many other contemporary cemeteries, suggests that they were not being stigmatised in death (Shepherd Popescu forthcoming). There is, then, little to suggest that in later Anglo-Saxon society physically impaired and diseased individuals were routinely excluded from normal Christian burial. Nonetheless, the burial of physically impaired individuals outside of churchyards or, as at Raunds, at the limits of consecrated ground requires explanation. It may be that issues such as personality and behaviour contributed to decisions about appropriate burial location, but it is equally possible that in spite of the lack of association made between disease and physical impairment and sin within learned circles, there was still nervousness within the wider population about physically impaired and diseased individuals and about the appropriateness of their burial among the rest of the Christian faithful. The contemporary written record suggestively indicates that physical imperfection was a bar to the holding of office, fulfilment of military duties, participation in religious life and representation before the law (Crawford this volume), all of which were, in particular, major components of the construction of Anglo-Saxon masculinity. This may have been another factor that determined the burial rite and location provided for those with physical impairments, especially males.

Physical Impairment and the Limitations of the Evidence

When exploring evidence for the treatment of physically impaired individuals in death, it is important to remember, firstly, that we can only identify the physical conditions they experienced if they left a mark on the skeleton, although advances in biomolecular techniques may eventually enable us to identify the presence of diseases that affect only the soft tissues (Cox and Roberts 2003, 20). Many of the physical impairments mentioned in

the contemporary written record and discussed by Sally Crawford elsewhere in this volume are not identifiable osteologically (Cox and Roberts 2003, 13–22). Secondly, caution needs to be exercised in relying upon older osteological reports, which may not conform to the conventions of osteological recording expected today, and it should also be remembered that some conditions are extremely difficult to identify confidently, even by experienced osteologists. For example, a second possible case of leprosy tentatively identified at Raunds (Boddington 1996, 69; Powell 1996, 123) is now thought unlikely to be leprosy (Craig and Buckberry this volume), and therefore attempts, however measured (*e.g*. Thompson 2004, 97), to use this example to discuss Anglo-Saxon attitudes are misleading. Similarly, the possible case of a child aged 8–9 years with a cleft palate at Raunds (Powell 1996, 123) is now recognised as the product of taphonomic loss of the palatine bone at the back of the hard palate of the maxilla (Buckberry, *pers. comm.*).

Thirdly, we must be careful about assuming that conditions identifiable on the skeleton necessarily had a detrimental effect on the life of the individual. For example, a condition such as diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH), involving the fusion of at least four vertebrae, and associated with obesity and diabetes (Cox and Roberts 2003, 32), can produce severely distorted spinal columns, but it may have been manifest only as a bad back during lifetime, or have resulted in limited mobility, not necessarily as a debilitating condition. Fourthly, we cannot easily assess the pain that would have arisen from certain conditions, still less can we be certain about the pain thresholds of individuals. Finally, in interpreting the funerary treatment of physically impaired individuals we must acknowledge that equality of treatment in death does not necessarily equate to equality of treatment in life.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that concurrent with the superficially equal funerary treatment accorded to men, women and children that there is evidence for some individuals, in particular adult males and children, being provided burial in particularly prestigious locations or elaborate form, and for some individuals conversely being excluded from normal treatment, in particular younger adult males. It appears that there was a disproportionate emphasis on adult male burials as a means of expressing status, and that males, in particular young adults, were simultaneously more vulnerable to exclusion after death. Yet, it should be stressed that it is important to assess unusual burial rites in their broader context. Certainly, for example, males who had met a violent death, whether as a result of execution or warfare, were often buried in distinctive locations. However, individuals who exhibit evidence of apparently fatal weapon wounds are also encountered alongside the burials of the wider population (Hooper 1976, 240–2; Boocock *et al*. 1995, 9–12; Hall and Whyman 1996, 96), and it appears that there were a variety of responses to violent death and these were perhaps dictated by the circumstances in which the individual died. Similarly, prone burial can be assigned to a range of factors, including both an act of penance and a sign of damnation. Finally, while some physically impaired individuals were given distinctive burials, the majority were not and this suggests that in death they normally took their place among the rest of the Christian faithful to await their judgement with equal prospects of salvation.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the editors for their invitation to contribute to this volume, and for their helpful feedback on an earlier version of this paper. Diana Swales, Lizzy Craig, Andrew Chamberlain and an anonymous referee also provided valuable feedback. I am grateful to Sally Crawford and Elizabeth Shepherd Popescu for access to, and permission to cite, their forthcoming work, to Annia Cherryson and Jo Buckberry for permission to cite their unpublished theses, to Diana Swales for access to her forthcoming work on Black Gate, Newcastle, and to Lizzy Craig for providing a copy of her analysis of the Raunds burials. I would like to thank Oliver Jessop for the illustration, Andy Chapman of Northamptonshire Archaeology for supplying photographs, and David Heslop of Newcastle County Council for permission to reproduce a photograph of the Black Gate excavations. I am also grateful to Jo Buckberry for facilitating access to the Biological Anthropology Research Centre at the University of Bradford.

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9. The Bowl Hole Burial Ground: A Late Anglian Cemetery in Northumberland

Sarah E. Groves

Introduction

Bamburgh is a small village on the Northumbrian coast, 50 miles north of Newcastle and 15 miles south of Berwick (Figure 9.1). The village is dominated by Bamburgh Castle, situated on a basalt outcrop overlooking the North Sea and the Farne Islands. In 1996 the Bamburgh Research Project (B.R.P) was established to explore the archaeology of Bamburgh Castle and the surrounding area, and since 1997 has carried out excavations in the Bowl Hole late Anglian (mid seventh to eighth century) cemetery situated to the south of the castle site. This paper will present the findings of the excavations to date and also the preliminary results of an ongoing AHRCfunded study of the human skeletal sample.

Past Investigation of the Site

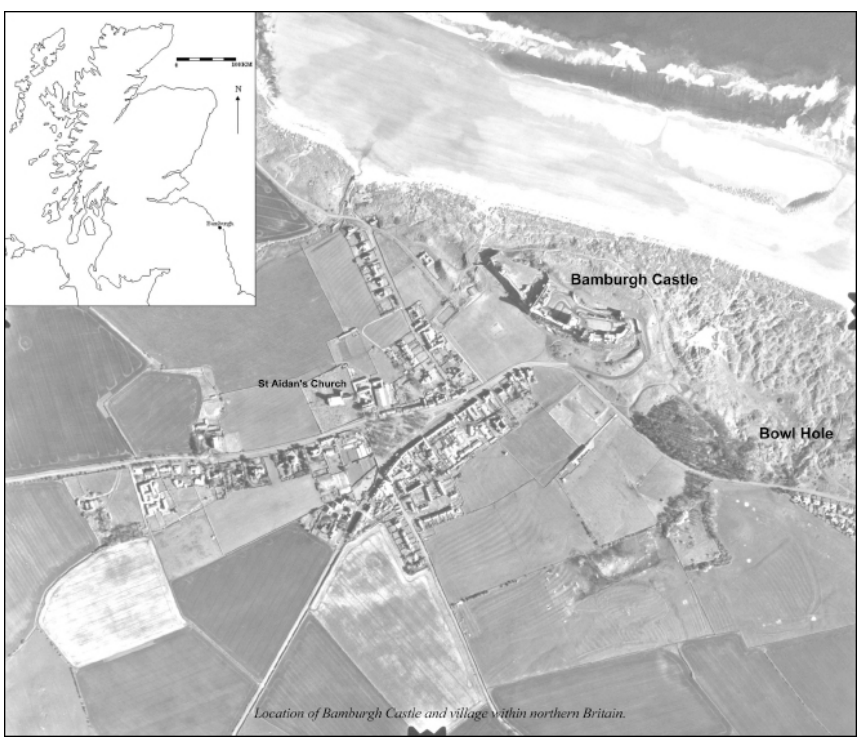
The Bowl Hole cemetery was initially identified in 1817, when violent winter storms removed a large quantity of sand from the area, revealing several human burials. The graves were described as 'formed of flagstones set on edge' (Bateson 1893, 56–7). It is unclear to what extent the site was investigated at this time, but excavations in 1894 revealed several cist burials, two crouched burials and an infant (Anon. 1905, 203–4). Unfortunately none of the early excavations produced records, but in 1935 a small quantity of human bone, together with an iron object found at the Bowl Hole, were donated to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle (Accession No: 1956.110.A, box 310).

During the 1960s Brian Hope-Taylor, of Cambridge University, attempted to re-locate the cemetery, excavating along the ridge to the south of the castle and in the area that is now the Castle car park, without success (Hope-Taylor 1962). It appears that Hope-Taylor did not consult the 1886 First Edition Ordinance Survey map, which clearly shows the 'Old Danish Burying Ground' in the dunes to the south of the castle. Site inspection of the Bowl Hole in the 1960's by Northumberland County Council indicated that human bone had recently eroded from the surrounding ground (SMR No: NU13SE12).

In 1997 the B.R.P. set out to find the cemetery and assess the level to which the site was being damaged by erosion and encroaching sycamore trees, by excavating three test pits in the area suggested by the OS map. The test pits were sited on a plateau (at *c*.11 to *c*.13m above sea level), some 300m south east of Bamburgh Castle (Figure 9.1) overlooking the Bowl Hole, which is a large, seasonally-flooding dune slack at the edge of the coastal dunefield. Soils in the area of the cemetery are composed of sandy topsoil, 0.2 to 0.35m in depth, overlying a thin (0.05 to 0.2m) layer of brownish yellow sand, over a pink-orange

sandy clay. The first two test pits found only wind-blown sand while the third of these test pits revealed a cist burial. A 5m square trench was excavated on the site of the third test pit, and produced seven grave cuts with a mixture of burial practices and orientations (Groves *et al., in press*). Further excavations from 1999 to 2006 have produced 92 individual skeletons and a large quantity of disarticulated bone (Figure 9.2). Two of the individuals excavated in 1999 were radiocarbon dated, producing 2 sigma calibrated dates of between AD 560 to AD 670 for skeleton 130 and AD 640 to AD 730 for skeleton 129 (P. Wood *pers. comm.*).

In 2005 and 2006 three gully features, 318, 319 and 359 were identified; these features were between 1.5 and 2m in length, although their full extent was not identified. Gullies 318 and 319 cut one another and both continue outside the area excavated in 2005. Both were filled with dark, charcoal rich soils containing animal bone (some showing butchery marks), fish bone, and marine shells (mainly limpets with some mussel, cockle and periwinkle). Gully 359, excavated in 2006 contained a similar mix of finds. Gully 318 also contained the remains of postholes, indicating that it was part of a structure. The presence of such large quantities of animal and fish bone, shell and charcoal in the gullies may represent the remains of funeral feasts, with the debris from feasting being deposited in the remains of a (demolished) grave structure. These features stratigraphically post-date the nearby graves, but may well be part of the burial ground as they directly overlie some of the burials. Other early medieval cemeteries have contained structures erected around specific graves, for example at Castledyke South, Barton on Humber (Drinkall and Foreman 1998). However, as we do not yet know the shape or full extent of these features, any conclusions must remain tentative until further excavation can be carried out.



Location of Bamburgh Castle and village within northern Britain.

Figure 9.1: The location of Bamburgh in Northern Britain, and the location of the Castle, Bowl Hole Cemetery and church of St Aidan in Bamburgh village, © B.R.P.

The full extent of the cemetery has not yet been identified; the eastern edge of the site appears to have eroded into the Bowl Hole proper, and the density of burial decreases to the west, where there is evidence for a boundary ditch (see Figure 9.2). The southern and northern edges of the cemetery have also not been identified, but to the north the plateau ends, and as the burials in this region are generally shallow, erosion may have removed any evidence for boundaries. To the south the clay plateau extends for several hundred metres, and in 2004 exploratory trenches uncovered two burials around 30 metres to the south of the main cemetery area (shown as an inset in Figure 9.2). These burials were very similar to those in the main area, and shared a similar orientation, suggesting that they are a continuation of the same cemetery.

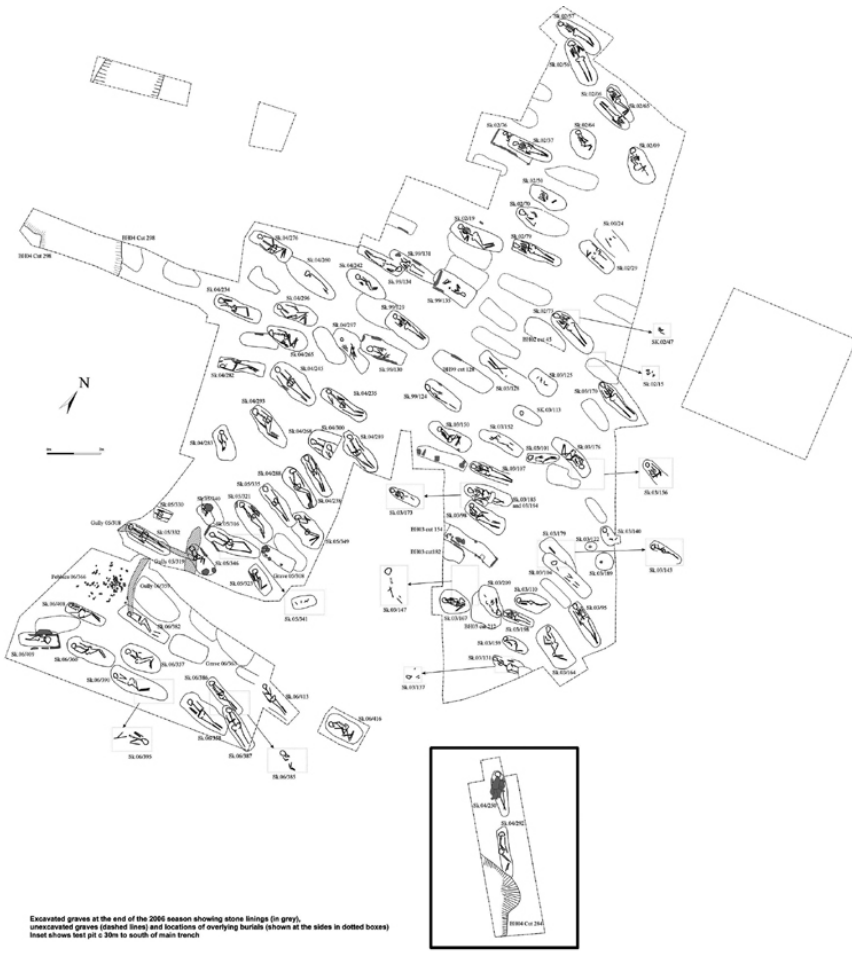


Figure 9.2: Cemetery plan for the Bowl Hole cemetery, Bamburgh, at the end of the 2006 season of

excavation. Stone linings to graves are shown in grey, unexcavated graves are shown with dashed lines, overlying burials are shown to the sides. Scale is 2 metres. © B.R.P.

As part of the current AHRC-funded research project a geophysical survey of the area of the Bowl Hole burial ground was carried out in December 2006, by Archaeological Services Durham University. Magnetometer and electrical resistance surveys were undertaken over an area of 0.25 hectares. This survey identified several features that may be burials and other features including possible ditches, and discrete dipolar magnetic anomalies which may represent ferrous items within graves (Archaeological Services Durham University 2006). Further excavation took place in summer 2007 which explored the areas highlighted by the geophysical survey and obtained a sample of the skeletons buried in the southern part of the cemetery. Analysis of this new material is ongoing and consequently this paper deals with the excavated evidence up to and including the 2006 season. Based upon the density of burials excavated to date, the Bowl Hole burial ground may consist of several hundred burials, which would make this one of the largest early medieval cemeteries in Northumbria, and certainly one of the best preserved.

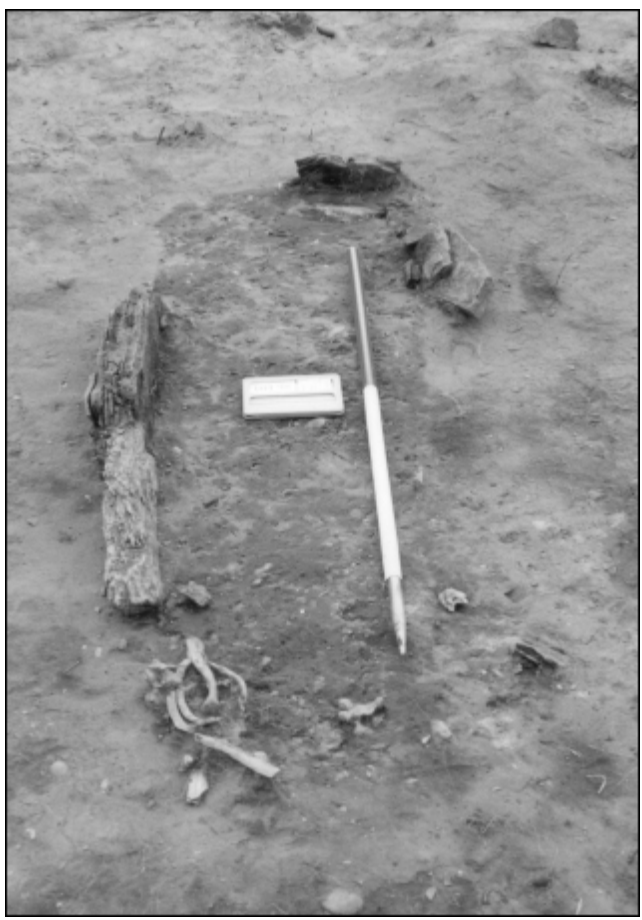


Figure 9.3: Partial cist grave from the Bowl Hole burial ground, Bamburgh. Vertical shale slabs are present on three sides of the grave cut. Scale is 1 metre. © B.R.P.

Position	Supine	Prone	Semi-flexed	Flexed	Unknown
No.	31	19	22	11	9
%	33.7	20.7	23.9	12.0	9.8
Burial type	**Partial Cist**	**Single Stone**	**Stones**	**Stones and partial cist**	**Plain grave**
No.	13	8	2	2	67
%	14.1	8.7	2.2	2.2	72.8
Orientation	**W - E**	**NW - SE**	**E - W**	**NE - SW**	**Unknown**
No.	70	10	7	2	3
%	76.1	10.9	7.6	2.2	3.3

Table 9.1: Burial practices at the Bowl Hole cemetery; the number and percentage of burials in each position, orientation and the variety of use of cist linings and stones in graves.

Burial Practices

Several different types of burial are found in the cemetery. There are the stone-lined or cist graves for which the cemetery was first noted; these are orientated roughly west-east (with the head to the west) in all but two cases, where the bodies were buried east-west (with the head to the east). These graves occasionally contain animal bones, but few other grave goods such as buckles and small knives. Some of the cists have been re-used or show signs of having been disturbed at some point in the past, and contain a mixture of semi-flexed, flexed, supine and prone burials (Figure 9.3).

The cist burials show a great deal of variation in form, ranging from a single vertical slab to a series of slabs lining several sides of the grave. The cists are formed from local black shale, roughly cut into slabs with minimal dressing of the stone. Although erosion may have removed some side and capping slabs, no complete cists have been found, and only one burial has been excavated with a base slab, so this cemetery differs somewhat from the long cist and 'head support' stone cemeteries found in eastern Scotland (for examples see Carver 2004 and Proudfoot 1996). Cemeteries of this period are rare in Northumberland, and there are very few sites in the region that have cists of this type, the most similar sites being found further to the north in Scotland (Proudfoot 1996). This may reflect connections between the people buried in Bamburgh and those in Scotland, rather than England. As the stone linings are incomplete, it seems that at Bamburgh the cists may have been formed from a combination of stone and timber, although there are no surviving traces of timber, unlike at other sites such as Whithorn in Scotland (Hill 1997). Other graves have no stone lining, but some have a single vertical slab while others have stones underneath or either side of the head, or other stones placed on or around the body. Table 9.1 summarises the number and percentage of burials with cist slabs, stones on or around the body and plain graves.

Many of the graves show signs of erosion in the past, and it is possible that erosion is responsible for the partial nature of many of the cist burials. Skeletal material is scattered across the site and in some cases entire elements are missing, particularly in the earth dug graves. The graves without cist slabs are generally in two depths; some are extremely

shallow, often immediately below the turf, while others are up to 0.5m deep. This variation in the depths of the graves indicates that there were at least two phases of use of the cemetery, or possibly a period of accumulation of wind-blown sand, which may have been a rapid event.

The deeper burials were found throughout the excavated area. Where it is possible to establish stratigraphic relationships between the burials, as in the five cases where one burial cuts another, rather than the cases of apparently 'stacked' burials, the shallow burials are cut by the deep burials, in all but one case. At present, this difference in burial depth is believed to be the result of erosion during the lifetime of the cemetery; several burials at the southern end of the excavated area are cut through a deposit of windblown sand, and it is likely that this sand originally covered the entire cemetery. At some point, a storm or series of storms removed the sand, perhaps uncovering some of the graves. The cemetery continued to be used after this point, but as the ground surface was lower, graves were dug into the underlying clay.

In certain areas of the cemetery, the graves are arranged in rough rows running from north to south, apparently respecting earlier burials. The presence of these rows suggests that they were marked in some way, possibly with mounds or stone or wood grave markers that have been lost over time (Wood 2003), if they were used at all. However, a small number of graves disturbed earlier burials; in some instances the new burial has been placed in such a way to avoid substantial damage to the earlier burial (for example, Skeletons 176 and 156 where the skull of the latter was deliberately positioned over the skull of the former). These features could be accounted for by differential erosion through the site, obscuring some graves but not others, however it is possible that some or all of these cases could be the deliberate digging of new graves through older, visible graves, reflecting for example status or family ties. It should also be noted that most of the juvenile and infant burials are very shallow, and some are directly above, and in one case beside, other skeletons. This positioning may again be intentional; although few of the inter-cutting burials seem to be contemporary, some may indicate preferential re-use of an area for consecutive burials. Stoodley (2002) argues that consecutive stacked and intercutting burials do not indicate the re-use of a 'family plot' as the primary burial is usually moved aside to make space for the next burial. However, in cases where stacked burials were added with concern for the primary burial this may indicate a family or household plot. Analysis of non-metric skeletal and dental traits may give an indication of whether individuals were biologically related, and this analysis will be applied to the Bowl Hole sample to try to identify family groups within the cemetery.

Like the cist burials, the individuals buried in simple earth graves were in a variety of positions; bodies were placed in both prone and supine positions, extended and flexed and with a variety of upper and lower limb placements (Table 9.1). Prone burial was unusually common at this site and has been associated with criminality and penance in the later Anglo-Saxon period (Reynolds 2002), and has even been considered to be evidence for 'live burial' at Norton in North Yorkshire (formerly Cleveland) (Sherlock and Welch 1992) and Sewerby in North Yorkshire (Hirst 1985). This does not seem to be the case in the Bowl Hole; the prone burials were not thrown casually into the graves as appears to be the case at Norton and Sewerby. At Bamburgh the majority of the prone burials were deliberately placed and carefully arranged, with the arms and legs placed in similar positions to the supine burials, suggesting that prone burial may have a less sinister meaning here. The majority of burials were orientated either east-west or southeast-northwest, although some individuals were buried with their heads to the west. Table 9.1 summarises the burial

practices at the Bowl Hole cemetery.

Demography and Palaeopathology

To date 92 distinct individuals have been excavated, and a further minimum of 21 individuals represented by disarticulated skeletal material. Individual skeletons were analysed using standard osteological methods of ageing and sexing (Brickley and McKinley 2004). Of the distinct individuals analysed, 63 were adults (68%), 29 were juveniles (32%) and, of the 63 adults, 29 were male (46%), 26 were female (41%) and eight individuals (13%) were of unknown sex. Individuals of all ages were present, ranging from neonates to elderly adults. The demographic data for the Bowl Hole sample is shown in Table 9.2 below.

Many of the adults were tall and robust; the range of male stature was from 159 to 183cm (mean male stature 172cm) and the range of female stature was 156 to 172cm (mean female stature 164cm). Compared with the mean male and female stature from other early medieval cemeteries in Britain (mean male 172cm, mean female 161cm, Roberts and Cox 2003, 195), this is relatively high, particularly for females. There is little comparative data for cemeteries in Northumberland, but the mean statures at the Norton Mill Lane and Norton Bishopsmill cemeteries in Cleveland are a useful comparison (Annis and Anderson in press; Sherlock and Welch 1992). The fifth- to seventh-century skeletal sample from Mill Lane had a mean male stature of 173cm and mean female stature of 164cm, very similar to that seen at Bamburgh. However, at the later seventh- to ninth-century cemetery at Bishopsmill School mean stature was considerably lower; mean male stature was only 168cm and mean female stature was 162cm. This difference may indicate variation between these sites in diet and childhood health which may be due to differences in status between the settlement at Bamburgh and the rural cemetery at Norton Bishopsmill School.

Adult	18-35	36-50	51 and over	Unknown
No.	15	16	26	6
%	24	25	41	10
Juvenile	**Neonate**	**Infant <5**	**6-12**	**Adolescent >12**
No.	2	5	18	4
%	7	17	62	14

Table 9.2: Age at death for adults and juveniles from the Bowl Hole cemetery. Disarticulated remains of a further three neonates were also identified amongst charnel.

Palaeopathological analysis of the skeletal material has revealed an interesting and varied range of pathological conditions and non-metric traits, but also surprisingly low frequencies of certain conditions. Cribra orbitalia and porotic hyperostosis (conditions that may be associated with nutritional stress or anaemia) were infrequent and generally seen only in juveniles and young adults. Together with the relatively tall adult stature and low incidence of dental enamel hypoplasia (thought to be caused by childhood illness or malnutrition) this suggests that the majority of individuals did not suffer from significant nutritional stress during childhood.

Infectious disease was also infrequent in the Bowl Hole skeletal sample; there were no cases of osteomyelitis and only a few cases of periostitis, which were generally restricted to the lower limbs. Sinus infections were also infrequent and were almost exclusively associated with dental caries (see below). One individual had a possible case of specific infection; reactive periosteal woven bone was present on almost all of the elements of the skeleton of a young adult female, particularly the long bones, pelvis and vertebrae. Although the precise cause of the condition in this individual is uncertain, the lesions throughout the skeleton were active at the time of death so it is likely that the systemic disease that caused the lesions was also the cause of death. Although this young woman had a serious illness that may have greatly impacted upon her quality of life and may have required her to be cared for by the community, her burial was not unusual in any way. She was buried in a plain grave in a supine extended position, in a rough row of burials in the south-eastern area of the cemetery, beside the burials of other adults and children (see Hadley this volume for further discussion of disease and burial).

In contrast with the low rates of infectious disease, dental disease was very common in the Bowl Hole skeletal sample. Of the individuals with dentitions present, 84% had calculus, 47% had caries, 44% had ante-mortem tooth loss and 28% had one or more abscesses. In comparison with other skeletal samples from the north of England, these rates are very high; for example at Norton in North Yorkshire only eight percent of the sample had abscesses, 29% had caries and 17% had suffered ante-mortem tooth loss (Sherlock and Welch 1992). This striking difference between the two sites may be due to differences in diet; perhaps the people at Bamburgh had access to more cariogenic foodstuffs, such as refined flour, honey or fruit than those living in Norton. Another possible explanation for this difference is variation in the quantity of fluoride found in the ground water at these two sites; it may be that the level of fluoride in the water around Bamburgh was particularly low, while the area around Norton is known to have a particularly high level of natural fluoride in the ground water (Drinking Water Inspectorate 2008 and A. Caffell *pers. comm.*). In comparison with other contemporary sites such as Norton the percentage of adults in the older (51+ years) age group is high at Bamburgh, so it is possible that this is a contributory factor for the high frequency of dental disease.

Osteoarthritis of the vertebral or appendicular joints (as defined by the presence of eburnation; Rogers and Waldron 1995) was identified in 23 adult individuals, and osteophytes on the vertebral bodies were also frequent. Again, these frequencies are higher than those seen at Norton, but the relatively high proportion of individuals affected at Bamburgh may be due to the high proportion of older adults at the site, as osteoarthritis is strongly associated with increasing age.

Fractures to the ribs were the most common form of traumatic injury seen in the skeletal material with nine individuals affected. Four individuals had suffered injuries to the upper limb, including the radius, clavicle or humerus with three individuals having suffered fractured radii. One individual had a ‘contra coup’ injury to the left tibia and fibula and fractured ribs on both sides of the thorax. All of these injuries were of the type likely to be caused by a trip or fall, rather than interpersonal violence and were well healed, suggesting that the population may have had access to some basic medical treatment such as bone setting.

Two individuals show evidence for weapon trauma; one older adult male, aged 50 to 60 years had a well-healed wound to the frontal bone of the skull, possibly caused by a bladed weapon such as a sword or axe. This wound was clearly serious but not life threatening as it does seem to have fully penetrated the skull, and there is no evidence for any infection. A

second individual, SK 131, was less fortunate; a young adult male, aged 18 to 24 years, had a series of unhealed sharp weapon injuries to the left side of the body. This individual was buried in a supine extended position, in the more northerly area of the cemetery; there was one vertical shale slab at the northern edge of the grave cut but no other evidence for a cist. Although there were no grave goods associated with the burial, animal bones were found in the grave, which may be evidence for graveside ritual or feasting (Thompson 2002; Lee 2007). The grave was cut through at a later date by a cist grave to the east, and cuts through an east-west orientated prone burial to the west.

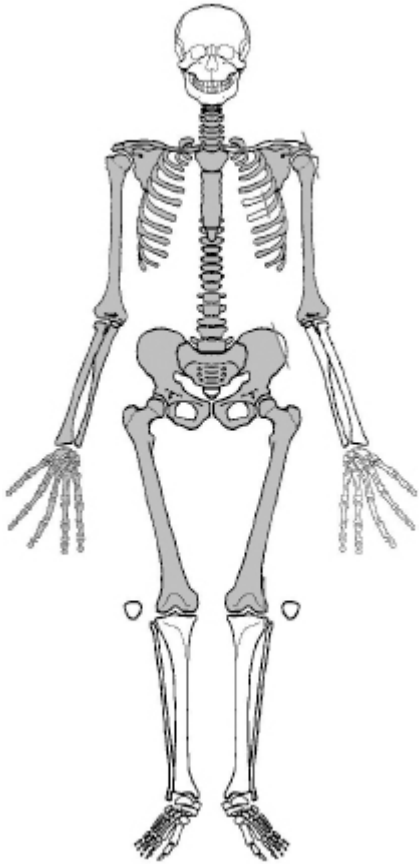


Figure 9.4: Location and angle of sharp force traumatic injuries on skeleton 131. Elements present are shown in grey; the skull, left forearm and hand, left clavicle and both lower limbs and feet were not present.

Injuries were identified from the left shoulder all the way down to the left knee of skeleton 131 (Figure 9.4). The coracoid process of the left scapula was removed, as was the lateral side of the head of the left humerus (Figure 9.5). Two left ribs were cut off from the mid shaft to sternal ends, part of the blade of the left ilium and part of the lateral condyle of the left femur were removed by a long bladed sharp weapon, possibly a sword or axe. The

cuts are very clean with a polished appearance, with no signs of healing and certainly caused enough damage to kill the individual. None of the cut fragments of bone were found in the grave, suggesting that these parts of the body were fully removed at the time the wounds were inflicted. The left humerus and scapula were rather thrown across the body in the grave, giving the impression that it was partially disarticulated, probably due to damage caused by the wounds.

Figure 9.5: Sharp force traumatic injury to the left scapula and humerus of skeleton 131. The polished surfaces resulting from the injury on the coracoid process of the scapula and the lateral side of the humeral head are visible (arrowed).

As all the injuries are on the left hand side of the body this indicates that it is most likely that he was attacked by a right-handed opponent, and the angle of the cuts suggests he was facing his attacker (Novak 2000). The location of the injuries down one side of the body means that it is possible that a single blow was responsible for all of the injuries, but if this was the case the attacker must have been extremely strong to strike a blow down the whole length of the body. It is also possible that the attacker was above the injured man, perhaps on horseback. The excellent preservation of this individual gives us the fascinating opportunity of reconstructing the last moments of his life. The fact that he was given a normal burial amongst the rest of the population suggests that his body was carried back from the scene of his death to be buried in this cemetery. Even though his death was violent he was still offered the normal burial rites of his community.

Other pathological conditions and changes to the skeleton may give an indication of the types of activities that people were undertaking in late Anglo-Saxon Bamburgh. Some conditions have been associated with physical activity, pathological and non-pathological conditions such as abnormal tooth wear, os acromiale, spondylolysis, enthesopathies, asymmetry in limb size and shape, Schmorl's nodes, and osteoarthritis (OA). Clinical and archaeological studies have related the development of these individual conditions to specific and general patterns of activity (see Jurmain 1999 for a summary of the study of

markers of activity-related stress in archaeological populations). Activities that have been suggested as causes of activity-related stress in archaeological populations include archery and weapon use (Stirland 2000; Peterson 1998; Schmitt *et al*. 2003), rowing (Lai and Lovell 1992), weaving (Kennedy 1989; Groves 2001) and a variety of agricultural and subsistence activities (Bridges 1989; 1991; Dutour 1986).

Figure 9.6: Anterior mandibular teeth from skeleton 19, an adult female, showing abnormal wear to the incisors that may be due to habitual use of the teeth as a tool.

In the Bowl Hole sample there is an apparent association between burial practice and certain markers of activity-related stress (discussed in more detail in the section below), and also patterns that may be indicative of specific activities. The anterior teeth (incisors and canines) of 19 individuals showed unusual patterns of wear (Figure 9.6), including chips and notches which may have been caused by using the teeth as tools, perhaps manipulating threads or cords or in the manufacture of fishing nets (Larsen 1997). Of these 19 individuals, 14 (74%) were female, four were male and one was of unknown sex. The majority of these individuals (13 skeletons, 68%) also had squatting facets on one or both tibiae, in fact only four individuals with squatting facets did not have notches on the anterior teeth. Together, these changes suggest that the people buried in the Bowl Hole may have been habitually involved in an activity that required them to use their teeth as tools and to spend time in a squatting position. One possible activity that might cause wear to the teeth is thread or cord making, perhaps for the production of fishing nets or alternatively baiting long lines for sea fishing (L. Gidney *pers. comm.*), and the possibility of cord making is supported by the discovery of a decorated bone lucet, a cord-making tool, in the Anglo-Saxon deposits of the nearby castle excavations.

Grave Goods and Biological and Social Identity

Some individuals were buried with simple grave goods including knife and belt sets, bone combs, latch lifters, small worked flints, animal bones, items of personal jewellery and faience beads. The location of the knives, belt buckles and pins suggests that where these

items were included in burials they were worn by the individual, rather than being deposited separately from the body. While the type and location of the grave goods indicate that the individuals were buried fully clothed or shrouded, there were none of the weapon burials or elaborate jewellery seen at earlier sites.

The cemetery was in use in the seventh and eighth centuries AD, the time that according to Bede, Christianity was brought to Northumbria, first by Paulinus in AD 627, and again by Aidan during the reign of Oswald, in the midseventh century (Bede HE ii. 14 and iii. 3, Colgrave and Mynors 1969). Therefore the simplicity of the grave goods could indicate the beginnings of Christian burial practices, although it is not possible to be certain that these individuals were Christian, or even that their religion would have had any impact upon the way in which they were buried. The bible does not make reference to whether a burial may or may not include grave goods, and the Church did not set out strict guidelines for burial practices (Thompson 2002) until it was well established, some 400 years after Christianity was first introduced to England (Taylor 2001). Recent excavations have produced evidence for richly accompanied burials dating from the mid-seventh century with clearly Christian artifacts, such as the 'royal' burial at Prittlewell, Southend and Bloodmoor Hill, Lowestoft, where a burial was found in an early Christian cemetery with a pendant cross necklace (Dickens *et al*. 2005). There is also evidence for the 'Christianisation' of pagan practices; some grave goods were decorated with Christian symbols, and baptismal spoons and crosses are found in some conversion-period burials (Hines 1997); and even saints were sometimes buried fully dressed and accompanied by grave goods, as was the case with St Cuthbert (Geake 2002).

Penitentials included restrictions upon non-Christian activities such as sacrificing to devils, eating food offered as a sacrifice and burning grain for the dead, which were forbidden by the late seventh century, and the ban against eating and drinking in the 'place where the corpse lies' was reinforced in the late 990s (Taylor 2001, 141). The fact that the Church had to rule against these practices implies that they were still taking place. Animal bones and teeth were frequent inclusions in the burials at the Bowl Hole, but the meaning of these animal bones is unclear. Lucy has suggested that in 'Final Phase' cemeteries they are more frequently associated with older individuals (Lucy 1998, 2000), and this was the case at Bamburgh. They may also be indicative of ritual feasting at the graveside, of the kind that was prohibited by the church in early medieval England. Many of the animal bones from the Bowl Hole have cut-marks or are broken in a manner that suggests they were processed for food, and some show signs of having been burned.

An earlier study by the author found a correlation between burial practices and age, sex and markers of activity-related stress in the skeletal sample from the Bowl Hole (Groves 2006). Animal bones were most frequently found in the burials of mature adult males, and these individuals were more frequently affected by osteoarthritis and enthesopathies in the upper limb than other males. This pattern of markers of activity-related stress was very similar to that seen in males buried with spears from the earlier Anglo-Saxon site of Castledyke South (Lincs.) (Groves 2006, 326), although no weapons were found at the Bowl Hole. Changes in social structure and burial practices from the seventh century appear to have greatly influenced the use of weapons as social articles (Härke 1992). Rather than being buried with their owners, weapons continued to circulate in society (Härke 2000). They may have been passed on to the heir, deposited in ritual offerings in water, or given to the king or church as *heriot* or to gain or reaffirm social position (Brooks 2000; Lillios 1999; Chadwick 1924; Stenton 1971). Härke suggests that it was the ending of the use of weapons as grave goods that lead to the development of the social importance of *heriot*

(Härke 2000).

Therefore, it is possible that some of the individuals buried without weaponry in later cemeteries held the same social role as the weapon burials from sites like Castledyke South, but are effectively 'invisible' in death. It is possible that the males buried with animal bones from Bamburgh are one of these groups; the burial practices distinguish them from other males in the cemetery, and the patterns of skeletal change are similar to those seen in the weapon burials from Castledyke. Although it may be too far to stretch the argument that these individuals from Bamburgh are also 'warriors', the possibility is interesting, especially considering that these individuals were almost certainly associated with the royal fortress at Bamburgh, and may have been retainers or *ceorls* to the kings. The fact that the one individual in the Bowl Hole assemblage who died as a result of weapon trauma was buried with animal bones does lend support to the possibility that animal bones were used to signify warrior status.

Historical Importance

The good preservation of the skeletal material, interesting range of burial practices and the range of pathological conditions that have been identified in the skeletal sample combine to make the Bowl Hole burial ground one of the most important Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the north of England. From a historical and archaeological perspective the site is also highly significant. The importance of Bamburgh in the early medieval kingdom of Northumbria is undisputed; it was the seat of the Bernician kings from the sixth century, and before that was probably the site of the British fortress, *Din Guaire* (Higham 1986; Rollason 2003). Bede refers to the royal city at Bamburgh when the Mercian army, under the leadership of Penda besieged the royal city at Bamburgh and attempted to set it alight. The Mercians gathered wood from the town to set light to 'that side of the city which faced the land' (Bede HE iii. 16, Colgrave and Mynors 1969). This is clearly a reference to the landward side of the great outcrop of basalt on which Bamburgh Castle now sits. Bede also refers to a royal estate where Aidan died in AD 651, near to the royal city at Bamburgh (Bede H.E iii. 17, Colgrave and Mynors 1969). It has been suggested that this estate is in the vicinity of the present village of Bamburgh, and that the church where Aidan died might have stood on the site of the present church of St Aidan in Bamburgh village.

Although the location of the royal fortress is known, the precise function of the fortress and surrounding area, and the activities that might have taken place there are uncertain, and it is these questions that the B.R.P set out to answer through excavation and survey of the castle, cemetery and surrounding landscape. Although the excavations being carried out by the B.R.P. in the West Ward of the present Castle have yet to fully explore the early medieval archaeology of the fortress site, the evidence to date suggests the presence of a variety of wooden structures and possibly manufacturing industries and metalworking at the site (P. Gething *pers. comm.*).

Large quantities of animal bones have been recovered from the trenches in the fortress site at Bamburgh Castle, both from the unpublished excavations by Brian Hope-Taylor and by the B.R.P., many of which show evidence for butchery and processing. Several large quern stones have also been found, although these are yet to be securely dated. The fortress at Bamburgh may have served as a centre for industry, or for centralising food processing, perhaps where food-rent was collected and re-distributed, as is suggested for the nearby palace site at Yeavering (O'Brien 2002). The fortress was also a defensive structure, and several arrow or small spearheads have also been found, although it is possible that these

are later than the period in question.

The 'royal city' or *urbs* and the 'royal estate' or *villa regia* recorded by Bede and in other documentary sources appear to have been separate but linked settlements, represented by the village and the fortress on the rock outcrop (Figure 9.1). As these two settlements were separate, it is reasonable to expect that they each had their own burial site. From the mid-seventh century, a church dedicated to St Peter was present within the fortress, where the relics of St Oswald were kept (Bede HE iii. 6, Colgrave and Mynors 1969). A small excavation in the area of the present ruined twelfth century chapel in 2005 as part of a Local Heritage Initiative project uncovered a substantial early medieval stone structure on a roughly east-west alignment which may be evidence for the Anglo-Saxon church of St Peter (G. Young, *pers. comm.*). This church may have been used for the burial of certain very high status individuals, particularly as churchyard burial was a minority rite in this period. However, space for burials within the fortress site is extremely limited, so a burial ground outside the fortress, but within sight of it, would be an ideal solution for this problem of where to bury the people associated with the fortress (Wood 2003). It is possible that the Bowl Hole cemetery was the burial ground associated with the *urbs*. Interestingly the only place in the modern castle where the cemetery is visible is from the site of the ruined chapel, a fact that may support the link between the cemetery and the population within the fortress.

The location of the Bowl Hole cemetery in relation to the fortress and the *vill* may be significant, and could be related to the status and role of the population that used it. The low rates of cribra orbitalia and non-specific infection, together with the relatively tall adult stature suggest that the people buried in the Bowl Hole cemetery were well nourished and suffered from few childhood diseases. They may have been high status individuals associated with the royal fortress on the rocky outcrop. Perhaps they were the people eating the animals being butchered and processed in the fortress, or the craftsmen working with bone and iron. There are striking similarities between the artefacts found in the Bowl Hole cemetery and those from the excavations in the West Ward of the Castle; there are bone combs, knives, buckles and beads of identical types at both sites, suggesting that there is a strong link between the fortress and the Bowl Hole cemetery. The cemetery is located within sight of the fortress and the sea, but not the present village, which is screened from view by a wooded ridge (see Figure 9.1). This may indicate that the people buried in the Bowl Hole cemetery were somehow separate from the *vill*, as they were not buried in the churchyard, which was almost certainly in use at the same time. Cemeteries that were not associated with churches were present in the seventh and eighth centuries, and in some cases contemporary with, but distinct from established churchyards, as there was no obligation for the dead to be buried in holy ground (Zadora-Rio 2003, Blair 2005; Buckberry this volume; Cherryson this volume). It is possible that the thirteenth-century parish church of St. Aidan in the present village stands on the site of the church that was dedicated to St Aidan after his death at Bamburgh, as discussed above. This church may have had its own cemetery that also served the royal estate, but as the cemetery surrounding St Aidan's church is still in use it is not possible to explore this site archaeologically. The fact that the Bowl Hole cemetery is apparently not associated with an ecclesiastical structure does not preclude the people buried there from being Christian or from being associated with the known settlements of the *urbs* and *vill*. The choice of the Bowl Hole as a burial ground for these people may be the result of a wide range of factors, including family ties, patronage, place of residence and personal choice (Zadora-Rio 2003). It may be that the choice of the plateau in the dunes, possibly right on the sea-front, as a place suitable

and desirable for burial had a particular meaning that we do not yet understand.

Preliminary analyses of oxygen, strontium and lead stable isotopes extracted from samples of tooth enamel from some of the skeletons from the Bowl Hole adds additional support to the idea that the individuals buried in the Bowl Hole were in some way distinct from the rest of the people living and dying in Bamburgh. Of the individuals analysed to date, only around half grew up in the immediate area, the remainder probably having grown up in the wider kingdom of Northumbria. One individual may have come from Iona or Ireland while three individuals may have come from northern Scandinavia (P. Budd *pers. comm.*). The high proportion of individuals buried at the Bowl Hole who apparently did not grow up at Bamburgh may indicate that this was a cemetery specifically reserved for 'outsiders' and their families, who had come to Bamburgh for economic or political purposes. However, the apparently 'normal' demographic profile of the skeletal sample argues against this being a cemetery simply for a group of mobile individuals; the demographic profile instead suggests settled family groups. As isotopic analysis can only show where people spent the first few years of their childhood, it is not possible to say at what point in their lives people migrated. It is possible that the people buried in the Bowl Hole were part of an itinerant court that moved about the kingdom of Northumbria in response to political changes, or that some were economic migrants such as craftsmen who moved to Bamburgh to work in the industrial area inside the fortress. Some may have moved to Bamburgh at a young age, settled and married and brought up families, leading to the apparently normal population demography. Interestingly, one of the individuals who may have come from Scandinavia is a middle-aged woman; perhaps she moved to Bamburgh to marry a member of the Northumbrian court and cement social and political relationships.

The current AHRC project will apply these techniques to all individuals from the cemetery that have surviving dental enamel, together with analysis of carbon and nitrogen isotopes to identify if there are variations in the diet of the individuals buried in the Bowl Hole. This analysis of dietary isotopes may reveal correlations between the proportion of certain foods in the diet and dental disease. As a high prevalence of calculus may be related to a meat-rich diet, it is possible that analysis of carbon and nitrogen isotopes may reflect this. This next phase of analysis may confirm the theory of a more mobile population, and also identify if the variations in burial practice seen in the cemetery correlate with differences in regional origin. Further radiocarbon dating will be obtained to construct a full picture of the phasing of the site, which may also help to understand the variety of burial positions, orientations and grave types seen at this site. As this project progresses the varied aspects; skeletal, isotopic, archaeological and artefactual analysis, will be brought together to create a full picture of the lives of the people who were buried in Bamburgh.

Acknowledgments

This research is supported by a Research Grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The principle investigator is C. A. Roberts, co-investigators are S. J. Lucy (University of Cambridge) and D. G. Pearson of the Department of Earth Sciences, Durham University. Thanks to L. Gidney for technical support, and G. Young, P. Gething G. Twomey, C. Henderson and all of the staff of the B.R.P. Finally thanks to P. N. Wood for preparing the cemetery plan and many enjoyable years of excavation.

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10. Investigating Social Status Using Evidence of Biological Status: A Case Study from Raunds Furnells

Elizabeth Craig and Jo Buckberry

This paper combines an analysis of social status and biological status within late Anglo-Saxon cemetery populations in order to illuminate how burial was used for social display in Christian cemeteries. It relies on recent re-evaluations of late Anglo-Saxon mortuary ritual, which emphasise variability in burial rites and grave elaborations, and which suggest that funerary display did not cease after the eighth century, as has sometimes been implied (Buckberry 2007; Hadley 2000a; 2004; Thompson 2004). This recent acknowledgement of social expression in the later Anglo-Saxon burial record allows inferences to be made about social status and society. The concepts of biological status used here were developed in the 1930s (Selye 1936), but not introduced into archaeological contexts until the 1980s, largely in studies with an economic focus (*e.g.* Cohen and Armelagos 1984). The combined analysis of the biological and social statuses of individuals within a community can greatly enhance our understanding of mortuary ritual by emphasising which individuals in society were afforded specific forms of treatment in death. Analysis of the spatial organisation of a cemetery also has the potential to reveal social and cultural patterning through a consideration of hierarchy of space, as, for example, graves in close proximity to a ritual focus could be considered to occupy a higher status position than those at a distance.

It has been suggested that a disciplinary separation between bio-anthropology and social archaeology has resulted in a paucity of studies that seek to link the approaches characteristic of the two fields (Robb *et al.* 2001, 213). In response, this paper aims to emphasise the potential of the combination of such methods and the need to tackle the lack of this form of integrated cemetery analysis for the later Anglo-Saxon period. A case study investigating social status and biological status amongst the tenth-eleventh century cemetery population at Raunds Furnells (Northamptonshire) is included.

Social Status and Late Anglo-Saxon Mortuary Ritual

Mortuary archaeology of the later Anglo-Saxon period has suffered from a lack of exhaustive study (examples of studies that do address this period include Buckberry 2007; Hadley 2000a; 2004; and this volume; Reynolds 1997; 2002; 2009). Academics appear to have been deterred by the paucity of symbolic inclusions encountered in graves and the apparent simplicity of funerary rites, and excavators dissuaded by difficulties such as complex stratigraphy (Kjølbye-Biddle 1975) and the continued usage of church sites. Past research has characterized the burial rites of the Christian period as uniform, lacking the symbolic expression of earlier Anglo-Saxon contexts, and reflecting universal and

egalitarian burial provision (Hodder 1980, 168; Geake 1997, 127; Carver 1999, 8). The 'final phase' model, which developed from the work of T. C. Lethbridge and E. T. Leeds in the south-east of England during the 1930s (Lethbridge 1931, 1936; Leeds 1936), and has been drawn together and refined since (Hyslop 1963; Meaney and Hawkes 1970; Faull 1976), concludes that burial from the eighth century onwards is located entirely in churchyards and uniformly free from grave goods (Meaney and Hawkes 1970, 51). The standard model of burial for the later Anglo-Saxon period emphasises large, static, Minstercontrolled cemeteries (Blair 1988, 35) and reinforces the impression of an egalitarian rite.

However, several theoretical advances in mortuary archaeology have questioned this interpretation. Changes within the social and economic structure of society are now considered to be equally influential in their effects on burial practice to that of the Church, with some scholars denying the input of Christianity at all (Boddington 1990; Halsall 1995, 61–3; Stoodley 1999). Documentary research supports this, highlighting a distinct lack of ecclesiastical intentions to prohibit the use of grave goods or prescribe alternative burial rites in the Anglo-Saxon period (Bullough 1983). Furthermore, there is compelling evidence for continuity from earlier to later Anglo-Saxon periods attested by continued ecclesiastical condemnation of the use of incantations, sacrifices and other superstitious ritual well into the later medieval period (Thacker 1992, 156–7). In addition, prior to the development of the parochial system in the tenth century, church cemeteries were probably too scarce to have accommodated everyone (Buckberry 2004, 19) and alternative places of burial clearly persisted well into the tenth century (Blair 2005, 244; Buckberry this volume; Cherryson 2008; this volume). The concurrence of the emergence of churchyard burial and the origins of a geographically fixed burial location, which existed throughout the medieval period, appears to be spurious. It is becoming increasingly clear that burial places were fluid, being set up and falling into disuse throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period (Morris 1983, 52; Hadley 2000b; Buckberry this volume; Cherryson this volume). It is possible to see Christianity as providing a new arena for the existing practices of expressing social and economic identities, but without diminishing the desire for expressing such concepts in burial (Hadley 2000a, 152).

The methods by which social identity could be expressed in later Anglo-Saxon burial practices have been discussed in several recent papers. Individuals could be buried in one of a range of cemetery types, some of which would be expected to attract higher status patronage than others. For example, royal foundations, Minsters and higher status churches would have conferred an intrinsically higher status to those buried there than, for example, manorial cemeteries (Reynolds 1997; Buckberry 2004, 2007; Hadley 2004). Individuals within cemeteries could also be distinguished by a range of grave types and elaborations including grave structures, containers for the body, elaborate grave markers or covers, stone inclusions, clay or charcoal linings, or unadorned plain earth graves (Buckberry 2004, 2007; Cherryson 2005; Hadley 2000b).

The study of symbolism within the burial record has undergone a dramatic change in theoretical perspective in recent decades. Most notably, the nature of what is being represented in a cemetery has been revealed as a complex and actively constructed representation of society, not a simple reflection of everyday life (Saxe 1970; Binford 1972; Goldstein 1976; Tainter 1978; Parker Pearson 1982; Hodder and Hutson 1986, 2; Lucy 2000). It has also been emphasised that the body does not 'bury itself ' but is interred by the wishes of community members, perhaps family or religious authorities (Wason 1994, 67). Symbolic expression is argued to legitimise dominant culture and forms an important factor

in its construction and reciprocation (Barrett 1991, 206), suggesting a viable reflection of socio-cultural features in the mortuary record. Although these theoretical approaches have been adopted in the study of earlier Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, they have made little impact on later Anglo-Saxon mortuary archaeology to date.

Prior to the 1990s, research suggested that earlier Anglo-Saxon burial rites codified social status, age and sex, denoted tribal groupings and generally classified society (Hawkes 1973, 186–7; Sheppard 1979; Arnold 1980; Alcock 1981). However such studies rely heavily on grave goods to provide a proxy for social status, yet have tended to be uncritical of the subjectivity of 'value' (Stoodley 1999, 6), neglecting the fact that grave goods do not supply a straightforward index of wealth or the social standing of the deceased (Hadley 2000a, 155). Awareness of this problem has stimulated a shift in research focus towards the investigation of other features within the cemetery that may convey status (*e.g.* Pader 1982), including many that exist in later Anglo-Saxon contexts. These include:

The Form of the Grave

- Treatment of the corpse (Boddington 1996: 13)
- Grave inclusions *e.g.* stone arrangements around the head and/or feet (Hadley 2000b)
- Identity of the individual *e.g.* age, sex, pathology, individual and family status (Buckberry 2007)
- Multiple interments (Stoodley 2002; Hadley this volume)
- Unusual or elaborate graves *e.g.* stone sarcophagi at York Minster and Winchester Old Minster (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 227; Philips and Heywood 1995, 82)

Organisation of the Cemetery

- Demography of population (age, sex *etc.*) (Buckberry 2007)
- Grave type (Buckberry 2007)
- Grave location *e.g.* proximity to foci (Adams 1996)
- Inter-cutting and special grave relationships, *e.g.* the concentration of graves, including several multiple interments, at Addingham (Adams 1996, 151–91)
- Boundaries (Gittos 2002)
- Grave markers *e.g.* at Kirkdale and Thornhill, Yorkshire, York Minster (Lang 1991, 60–6, 161–3)
- Central foci, *e.g.* church, sculpture, important graves (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992; Boddington 1996)

Cemetery Context

- Relationship to settlements (Hadley 2007)
- Cemetery type *e.g.* execution, church, non-church (Buckberry this volume)
- Status of associated church *e.g.* high status cemeteries at York Minster, St Oswald's, Gloucester and Winchester Old Minster (Phillips and Heywood 1995; Heighway and Bryant 1999; Kjølbye-Biddle 1992).
- Associated monuments *e.g.* above ground signalling of status for a wider audience (Hadley 2000a, 159)

A small, but growing number of cemetery analyses have begun to investigate the expression

of social status in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, with mixed success. Some general patterns that hint at differential treatment and a desire to express social concepts in the burial record can be seen at several sites. For example, graves at Addingham, West Yorkshire (Adams 1996, 151–91) appear to have a distinct focal point and there are several multiple interments in close proximity to this point, while at the same time grave cuts with no inhumations occur at the opposite end of the cemetery. The excavator's interpretation suggests that the community may have favoured one area of the cemetery, translating remains into other graves in the focal area, packing graves closer together and inserting them between earlier graves, rather than utilising areas of the cemetery more distant from this focus (Adams 1996, 151–91).

Analyses of other cemeteries have revealed other spatial patterns. For example, people of different sexes were more likely to be buried in different areas of the cemetery at St Mark's Lincoln (Gilmour and Stocker 1986) and at Ailcy Hill, Ripon, where phases 2 and 3 of the cemetery only contained males (where sex could be determined) (Hall and Whyman 1996, 120–2). A cluster of 16 burials near to the supposed grave of St Swithun at Winchester Old Minster also contained only adult males. Evidence indicates that these interments were made only intermittently, and were therefore the lowest in density of the entire cemetery, suggesting that these individuals were specially selected for such notable burial, perhaps as members of small religious communities (Kjølbye-Biddle 1992; Hadley this volume). However similar investigations at late Anglo-Saxon cemetery sites in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire found less conclusive evidence; while there was a tendency to bury more males in a more prestigious manner or location than females, this was by no means an exclusively male preserve (Buckberry 2004; 2007). Differential treatment of adults and juveniles has been reported at the Church Walk cemetery, Hartlepool (Daniels 1999, 109–10; 2007, 91–3) and Raunds, Northamptonshire (Boddington 1996, 55). Similarly, the combined analysis of York Minster, Swinegate, St Andrew's Fishergate, Barrow-upon-Humber, St Peters Barton-upon-Humber and St Mark's Lincoln (Buckberry 2004; 2007) has revealed a tendency for older individuals to be afforded more elaborate burial.

The overall demography of a cemetery may indicate the type of population buried there: for example high numbers of adults of the same sex may denote an ecclesiastical population. The north-eastern area of the cemetery at Wearmouth contains an unusually high proportion of males and juveniles, therefore has been argued to be the monastic cemetery where monks and novices were buried separately from other high status individuals (McNeil and Cramp 2005, 88). Similarly, the almost exclusively male population buried at Beckery Chapel, Glastonbury is argued to represent an exclusively monastic community (Rahtz and Hirst 1974, 33).

Biological Status: the Application of the Stress Concept to Archaeological Material

The human body requires certain conditions in order to thrive; therefore absence of, or restrictions in access to, these resources can have visible effects on the body. It is well recognized in modern populations that richer individuals have less biologically stressful lives and suffer fewer illnesses (Robb *et al.* 2001, 213), however attempts to explore this pattern in archaeological contexts has returned mixed and confusing results. Analysis of this kind began with the work of Hans Selye (1936) who associated environmental conditions with the expression of stress. Stress was defined as a series of nonspecifi c responses by the human body to a demand made upon it (Selye 1973). The term 'stress' in these studies was

used in its biological sense, referring to the physical manifestations of resource deprivation, not to the mental consequences of pressure. Individuals adapt to stress by various nervous, immunological and hormonal methods in order to maintain a homeostatic environment within the body (essential for the functioning of all systems) (Selye 1973, 699). It is this physical adaptation that has allowed biological anthropologists to adopt Selyean stress in skeletal analyses.

In order to apply stress studies to archaeological contexts, the theoretical assumption must be made that those who were wealthy within their contemporary societies had more opportunity to meet their biological needs than the poor or lower classes. These poorer individuals would therefore suffer greater biological stresses caused by a selection of factors such as inferior nutrition, higher levels of disease, polluted living conditions and water sources, lack of medical care and long hours of physically challenging labour (Robb *et al.* 2001, 213). This is then hypothesised to result in poorer health, smaller adult stature and shorter life span, factors which can be investigated in past populations by osteological and pathological analysis. An overall consideration of these physical manifestations of stress can be categorised as the 'biological status' of either an individual or community.

The manifestations of biological status on the skeleton were comprehensively considered by Goodman and colleagues (1984) with a primary aim of differentiating between populations suffering from varying levels of stress. A collection of conditions were identified and termed 'stress indicators' (Goodman *et al.* 1984, 15). The extent to which stress indicators are present on the skeleton depends on environmental constraints, cultural systems and host resistance to the original stressor (Goodman *et al.* 1984, 15). Cultural adaptations and social conventions can buffer stress, for example the use of dwelling places to prevent cold stress, or storage to counter famine. However, cultural adaptations can also magnify stress for certain individuals by creating inequality and differential access to resources. Within communities, the effects of environmental constraints and host resistances can be negated to some degree, as they will remain relatively constant (Goodman *et al.* 1984, 16). It can therefore be concluded that prevalence of stress indicators is an effective indirect reflection of biological status within societies. Biological status has been investigated by several other studies of both prehistoric and historical societies, which have suggested that elites were taller and/or healthier than their poorer contemporaries (Haviland 1967; Hatch and Willey 1974; Schoeninger 1979; Angel 1984; Rose 1985). However, it should be noted that other studies have shown little skeletal effects of polarised resource access (Wilkinson and Norelli 1981; White *et al.* 1993).

Pathological appearance on the skeleton	Aetiology
High stress results in death before skeletal manifestations have time to develop (Wood *et al.* 1992)	
Significantly slower growth rate reduces the proportion of bone formed of that stress (Tanner 1981)	
Occurring during periods of life when the body is most susceptible to damage, high susceptibility to malnutrition (Goodman and Rose 1991; Sarnat and Schour 1941)	
Radiolucent lines (Harris lines) appear, usually 1926 (Hansen 1935). However subsequent studies have suggested Harris lines remodel too quickly to be of use in adults (Garn *et al.* 1968, Walimbe and Gambhir 1994)	
Hypervascularity of the orbital roofs is respectively, leading pathological conditions (Stuart-Macadam 1985; 1989; 1992)	
Thickening of the cortex (Gibbons and Mahfouz 1984, 32-34) of the long bone diaphyses (shafts)	

Table 10.1: Stress markers, their skeletal manifestations and aetiologies.

The primary physical manifestation of stress, and one of Goodman's main stress indicators, is reduced age-atdeath. However, the incorporation of age-at-death data into palaeopathological and stress marker research is complex. Although succumbing to a fatal disease can be broadly considered as indicative of stress (the less healthy will be more likely to die) it cannot be directly inferred that all of those who died young were stressed. Many conditions that were likely to have been common in the past, such as septicaemia secondary to non-skeletal trauma, imply no initial level of stress for an individual, and would show no skeletal indication of their presence (Roberts and Manchester 2005, 2). These concepts form part of the so-called osteological paradox. Outlined by Wood *et al.* (1992), this emphasises that interpretation of the osteological appearance of health during life is complex and hazardous. For example, an individual with gross skeletal manifestations of disease or stress will have had to suffer *chronic* illness (*i.e.* for a long period of time), in order for the skeleton to develop bony manifestations of disease, indicating that they were fit and strong enough to survive beyond the initial stress. Conversely, an individual with no skeletal manifestations of stress or pathological lesions, especially if they died young, could conceivably have been either the healthiest or the most stressed member of a community. Good health throughout life will leave no trace, however so will sudden fatal illness for an individual with little resistance and poor initial health.

Acknowledgement of the osteological paradox within studies of biological stress serves to limit conclusions that may be drawn about individual cases. However, analysis of pathological prevalence rates can allow general patterns of stress to be inferred. The age-at-death of individuals with stressrelated pathology can also be interpreted, since, where high proportions of juveniles have stress markers, it is possible that stress caused them to die young. Because of the pitfalls outlined in the osteological paradox, it is therefore vital to consider a combination of varied stress markers to assess biological status. Some of these are outlined in Table 10.1.

Combined Analysis of Social and Biological Status

The study of both biological and social status has advantages and disadvantages. Stress markers can reveal whether an individual had access to nourishment, water and clean living conditions, and therefore, whether they were resource rich or resource poor. They can suggest aetiologies of stress and model the ways in which the skeleton reacts to demands placed upon it (Goodman *et al.* 1984). However, methods of assessing biological status fail to address intrinsic archaeological questions: why certain individuals within a society had more resources than the others; how this came about; and the quality of life experienced by people in the past. Social archaeology presents almost a complete mirror image of these successes and failings. Using theoretical constructions drawn mainly from ethnographic analogy, cultural patterns within burial rites can be identified and associated with social status. Those who were commemorated with more exotic items, in association with extravagant structures and with greater energy expenditure, can be considered as the most wealthy or high status (Parker Pearson 1982) and, by default, considered as having more resources. However, social archaeology cannot provide the evidence to confirm they suffered less stress. There is an intrinsic caveat with all mortuary-based studies of status: that ritual is not expressing social values in an unambiguous and directly readable form (Bloch 1974; Lewis 1980, 8, 10–11, 19, 31; Parker Pearson 1982, 100). This problem has been examined briefly by theorists, who prefer to emphasise that the dead are subject to manipulation by different groups and that burial contexts reflect relationships between the

living and dead, an idealised social structure and changing power relations (Parker Pearson 1982) rather than ask in what ways this manipulation is occurring.

Studies which combine assessment of social status and biological status have the potential to address the issues identified above, providing both evidence for the experience of biological stress and a means by which its causes can be investigated. A much deeper picture of social and economic life is created: access to nutrition, levels of disease, living conditions including water sources, medical care and labour divisions can all be revealed and correlated with the way in which the individual was perceived and treated within a wider social context (Robb *et al*. 2001, 213).

There are few examples of previous studies that have exploited the potential of combining biological and social status suggested here. The first attempt was by Goodman and colleagues (1984) who proposed the use of multiple stress indicators to determine demographic patterning of stress at the tenth- to fourteenth-century AD site of Dickinson Mounds, Illinois. They emphasised the need to understand better the causes and responses of past populations to stress. As an early project, this was encouraging, however the full bio-cultural possibilities for this study were not explored. For example, the reasons why certain individuals of different age groups or sexes were in better health than others were not addressed. Conversely, an example of a study which employed social status without properly exploring biological status is that of Keswani (1989, 64), who identified group affiliation amongst a late Bronze Age Cypriot community from pictorial devices used on craters in Mycenaean tombs and then assumed that this reflected kinship ties, without considering any data regarding the biological status of the individuals.

Biological stress has been traditionally applied to certain, very restricted social concepts, for example Cook (1984, 237–71) used accumulations of stress indicators around the ages of two to four to evaluate the inadequacies of early agriculturalists' weaning diet. Other studies also link dietary stress and social status (for example the stable isotope evidence of Privat and colleagues (2002) for Anglo-Saxon diet and social status in the mid fifth- to early seventh-century cemetery at Berinsfield, Oxfordshire), and dietary stress and occupational stress (for example the early study of Lane (1887) on the physical hardship and 'pressure changes' (plastic skeletal responses) in contemporary working classes).

One modern study that does fully explore the potential of studying biological and social status is that of Robb and colleagues (2001), assessing an osteological collection and grave goods in Iron Age Italy. Dental enamel hypoplasia, cribra orbitalia and adult stature were not found to correlate with a measure of social status suggested by grave goods, however trauma, periostitis (inflammation of the outer layer of the bone commonly caused by infection or trauma) and Schmorl's nodes (pitting in the surface of the vertebral bodies caused by intervertebral disc herniation, thought to be a result of axial compression of the spine) were more frequent in unfurnished graves than those with grave goods. This allowed conclusions to be drawn about the divisions of labour between higher and lower status individuals (Robb *et al*. 2001, 213).

The successes of Robb and colleagues (2001) suggest that the study of both biological and social status could be fruitful for other archaeological periods. In response to this suggestion, a case study exploring the late Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Raunds Furnells, utilising the methods considered above for assessing status from both osteological data and grave elaborations, has been included here.

Social and Biological Status: a Case Study from Raunds Furnells

The cemetery at Raunds Furnells provides an ideal collection for comparing funerary rites and osteological evidence. The site is well recorded with detailed evidence of variability in burial provision (Boddington 1996). The site report hints at the differential treatment of certain individuals within the cemetery, for example a cluster of infants is clearly visible around the contemporary church walls and males seem to be more numerous in the zone around the church, indicating that more detailed analysis would find further relationships.

Radiocarbon dates were recovered from the church and graveyard and gave an average range of cal AD 978–1040 to 2σ for the cemetery (Boddington 1996, 72), placing its usage firmly within the late Anglo-Saxon period. The cemetery was completely excavated and a total of 361 inhumations recovered (Boddington 1996, 28), therefore it can be reasonably assumed that the remains analysed in this study represent the entire burial population. Demographic patterns indicate a normal community of all ages and both sexes, with about 40 individuals alive at any one time during its two centuries of use.

The inhumations were all within an enclosed churchyard (except for an infant buried under the chancel itself), orientated in rows of supine, west-east aligned graves, surrounding the central church structure, a pattern common to early churchyard burial (Boddington 1996, 103). There was extensive variability in the mode of burial of individuals. More than half of the graves included stone linings and arrangements around the body, possibly to protect and support the individuals (Boddington 1996, 38). A maximum of six stone coffins were recovered; however poor wood preservation prevented the identification of more than two wooden coffins. The presence of other wooden coffins could, however, be inferred from body positioning (Boddington 1996, 42). Two *in situ* stone grave covers and three carved stone crosses were also discovered. Grave markers of some form appear to have been used frequently and 36 stone markers were excavated. Burial 5156 was so compactly positioned that the individual was almost certainly shrouded, and similar evidence for shrouding was observed elsewhere in the cemetery (Boddington 1996, 28).

No grave goods were found, which accords with the generally accepted nature of later Anglo-Saxon Christian burial ritual (Boddington 1992, 103), and no shroud pins or coffin fittings were recovered either (Boddington 1996, 13). However, textual evidence, combined with the paucity of shroud pins recovered at some sites, suggests that shrouds were sewn up with thread in the later medieval period, which would not leave an archaeological trace (Daniell 1997, 156–7;

Thompson 2004, 108; Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 23). The published report for Raunds and the original recording forms do not contain all of the information necessary to undertake a detailed study of stress markers, therefore the senior author (EC) re-analysed the skeletal material. In addition, re-analysis offered the opportunity to apply more recent methods of age estimation and sex assessment. Reanalysis was undertaken for the entire population of 361 individuals, of which 103 were males, 82 females and 162 juveniles. The standard osteological analyses of age-at-death, biological sex and living stature (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Brickley and McKinley 2004) were supplemented by analysis of a selection of the conditions considered to be indicative of biological stress, in particular linear enamel hypoplasia (LEH), cribra orbitalia and non-specific tibial periostitis. Harris lines were not included as their usage as a stress indicator had been widely criticized (Garn *et al*. 1968; Walimbe and Gambhir 1994) and porotic hyperostosis was found to be too rare in this population for any meaningful conclusions to be drawn from its analysis. A brief discussion of the study and aetiologies of these three conditions is included below.

Cribra Orbitalia

Cribra orbitalia has traditionally been considered a manifestation of anaemia. There are several causes of anaemia and its symptoms including iron deficiency (due to diet, loss of blood, inadequate absorption of iron or the sudden demands of accelerated growth or pregnancy), parasitic infection, a high pathogen load or hereditary conditions (thalassaemia and sickle cell anaemia) (Stuart-Macadam 1992). However, there is increasing debate over whether cribra orbitalia can be considered synonymous with anaemia, for example Wapler and colleagues (2004) found that over half of the cases of cribra orbitalia in their sample had no supporting histological evidence of anaemia, thus were more likely to be taphonomic damage with the appearance of a pathology, or related to another pathological condition, such as osteoporosis. More recently, Walker and colleagues (2009) have convincingly argued that cribra orbitalia, and especially porotic hyperostosis, cannot result from iron-deficiency anaemia, as the normal human response to iron-deficiency anaemia is to reduce rather than increase red blood cell production. They argue that porotic hyperostosis and some cases of cribra orbitalia result from vitamin B12 deficiency, but suggest that 'the cribra orbitalia that is common in some northern-European populations is more likely to be a result of scurvy or chronic infection… than it is of vitamin B12 deficiency' (Walker *et al*. 2009, 120). It is yet to be seen if these theories will gain wide acceptance. Despite the problems surrounding the aetiology of the lesions, cribra orbitalia is still regarded as an indicator of stress.

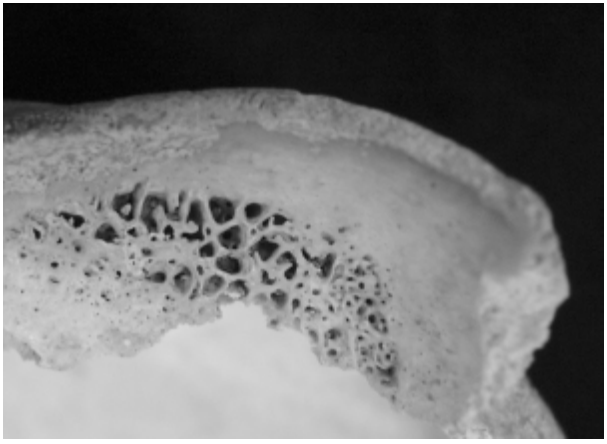

Figure 10.1: Cribra orbitalia on the left orbit, Raunds 5040 (Elizabeth Craig).

Cribra orbitalia is characterised by porous lesions of the orbital roof, and is believed to be a childhood condition (Figure 10.1) (Stuart-Macadam 1985). Many schemes have been suggested for ranking the lesions (*e.g*. Stuart-Macadam 1991; 1992; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994), however all incorporate a progression from discrete porosity to confluent lesions (Stuart-Macadam 1989).

Linear Enamel Hypoplasia

Linear enamel hypoplasias (LEH) are horizontal defects in the tooth enamel which occur during disruptions of ameloblastic activity in childhood, as the crown is developing, and

remain visible throughout life, making them a potentially excellent indicator of childhood stress (Figure 10.2). Many factors have been implicated in the formation of enamel hypoplasia including hereditary anomalies, localized trauma and systemic metabolic stress such as nutritional deficiencies or childhood illness (Goodman and Rose 1991).

Figure 10.2: Two bands of linear enamel hypoplasia, Raunds 5055 (Elizabeth Craig).

As dental enamel hypoplasia is linked to dietary factors, much of the archaeological work pertaining to them has focused on linking defect prevalence rates and periods of subsistence change (Goodman *et al*. 1984; Larsen 1984) and weaning (Goodman *et al*. 1984). The standard procedure is to record the number and type of teeth affected, number of defects, appearance and severity (Roberts and Manchester 2005, 77). In this study, number and severity of defects was recorded for the canines, where LEH has been found to be most easily identifiable (Condon and Rose 1992).

Tibial Periostitis

Periosteal reactions are caused by inflammation of the periosteum, the fibrous tissue that

covers the bone, which results in osteoblastic (bone forming) activity characterised by single or multiple layers of new bone formation on the bone surface (*i.e.* between the bone and the periosteum) (Figure 10.3). Periostitis can be a result of infection of the periosteum, haemorrhage under the periosteum (often due to damaged capillaries or secondary to soft tissue trauma), or ulceration (Ortner and Putschar 1985, 131). Many periosteal reactions are symptomatic of specific infections such as leprosy and syphilis; however other, specific, skeletal changes are always needed to diagnose specific infections (Rogers and Waldron 1989). The presence of largely symmetrical bilateral periosteal reactions can indicate a systemic illness, however in many cases the skeletal lesions may not be sufficiently distinct to allow identification of a specific disease. Despite their complex aetiology, periosteal reactions are frequently used as an indicator of general stress (Robb *et al.* 2001), especially when present on the tibia and/or fibula.

Active periosteal reactions appear as deposits or plaques of woven bone on the surface, which become more ordered, striated and compact as they heal, and this process can form the basis of a grading system. The most common location of infection is the tibiae, possibly because of the bones' proximity to the surface (the cooler temperature increases susceptibility to infection of its physiologically inactive surface, leading to easier bacterial colonisation) and blood stagnation in the lower legs resulting in bacterial accumulation (Roberts and Manchester 2005, 172–3).

The presence and severity of each stress condition was recorded on a scale between 0 (not present) and 3 (severe). This scoring system was developed in reference to the previous work of Stuart-Macadam (1982; 1991) (detailed in Craig 2006). The three stress markers described above have been used to represent the biological status of the individuals at Raunds. Social status was represented by data on burial position, grave form and location within the cemetery itself. Data was adapted from the site report (Boddington 1996) to form seven categories of elaborate burial (Table 10.2). These groups were chosen to best reflect the range of elaborations present at Raunds and represent some of the main burial types commonly found in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Rodwell and Rodwell 1973; Schofield *et al.* 1981; Painter 1982, 26–35; Gilmour and Stocker 1986, 15–20; Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 87–108; Rahtz and Watts 1997; Thompson 2002, 230–2; Buckberry 2007).

Stress Related Pathologies and Grave Elaboration

For the purpose of this study, any graves which appeared abnormal, or singled out from the general population in any way, are of interest. It has been initially and tentatively hypothesized that unusual graves were used for unusual people, for example those of abnormally high or low status, those with special roles within society or outsiders (see Hadley this volume). The attempted association of these graves with biological status inferred from stress markers on the skeleton is designed to reveal whether those unusual people, whose burial was marked in some way as distinct from the norm, were skeletally distinct also.

The prevalences of stress markers in the Raunds population were relatively high. Of the 361 individuals recorded, 85 out of 286 with orbits had skeletal evidence of cribra orbitalia (29.7%), 46 out of 187 with at least one canine had LEH (24.6%) and 109 out of 316 with at least one tibia present had tibial periostitis (34.5%). Several correlations between stress markers and grave elaborations produced statistically significant results (Table 10.3). Individuals with cribra orbitalia were more likely to be buried without an elaborate marker or cover (Chi-square=7.207, p=0.007). The general tendency for cribra orbitalia to be more

common in juveniles had the potential to affect this correlation, however, cribra orbitalia was not found to be more common amongst juveniles in the Raunds population. Individuals with tibial periostitis and LEH were also less likely to be buried in a grave elaborated with a marker or cover, but these results were not statistically significant. The occurrence of more individuals with all three stress conditions in plain graves than those with covers or markers provides some evidence that they were both poor in health and in social status, as their graves were less commonly marked above ground. The pattern of plain graves being used for individuals who experienced greater biological stress is not universally applicable, however, as a higher percentage of individuals buried in charcoal or clay burials had LEH than those buried without these elaborations (Chi-square=4.298, p=0.038). Several scenarios may explain this result. LEH reflects periods of stress experienced during childhood, so it is possible that the individuals buried in charcoal- or clay-lined graves achieved an elevated social status in later life. Alternatively, this result may suggest that either the childhood stress that causes LEH did not predominantly affect lower status individuals as might have been expected, or that the use of charcoal and clay in the grave was not linked to high social status at Raunds. It must also be noted that all other correlations between stress markers and grave elaborations produced no pattern, especially those which included differing severities of stress markers. In light of this mixed result, further analysis was undertaken to investigate the spatial distribution of stress markers and grave elaborations throughout the cemetery.

Figure 10.3: Tibial periostitis, Raunds 5256 (Elizabeth Craig).

Elaboration

Carved (stone) coffins

Graves with stone linings or arrangements

Possible wooden coffins

Graves with charcoal and/or clay linings

Graves with markers or covers

Graves with stones set under or around the head	60.1%
Plain earth graves	25.8%

Table 10.2: Categories and prevalences of grave elaboration used in this study.

	Prevalence of condition						Severity of condition					
	Cribra orbitalia		LEH		Tibial Periostitis		Cribra orbitalia		LEH		Tibial Periostitis	
	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p
Graves with stone linings or arrangements	0.479	0.489	1.237	0.226	0.072	0.788	3.934	0.140	1.535	0.464	1.103	0.576
Possible wooden coffins	2.644	0.104	0.046	0.830	1.295	0.255	1.604	0.488	3.324	0.190	1.073	0.585
Graves with charcoal and/or clay linings	0.343	0.558	4.298	*0.038*	0.000	0.989	1.345	0.511	0.757	0.685	1.074	0.585
Graves with markers or covers	7.207	*0.007*	1.851	0.174	1.827	0.177	1.973	0.373	1.009	0.604	0.544	0.612
Graves with stones set under or around the head	0.095	0.758	0.018	0.604	0.268	0.604	3.395	0.183	2.344	0.310	0.612	0.736

Table 10.3: Statistical correlations between stress markers and different forms of elaborate grave.

Spatial Analysis

In order to investigate the spatial distribution of both stress markers and grave elaborations, the cemetery was divided into zones in four different ways. Two of these were the zones identified by the excavator: one based on chronological phasing, the other an arbitrary grid. The former was included as it reflected Boddington's view of the site gained during excavation. Excavators can often glean important impressions from their sites and, even though no record may remain for confirmation of their conclusions, they should be given due consideration in later re-evaluations. However, Boddington's interpretation of the cemetery, and the location of his 'zones', appears to have been influenced by the demographic profile of the cemetery (*e.g.* the zone closest to the church appears to have been identified by Boddington as the area which contained a high number of infant burials). To undertake a more objective analysis of the spatial organisation of the cemetery, two additional zoning systems were created by the present authors; first, a division between areas to the north, south, east and west of the church, and, second, zones at two successive distances from the church (within 5m and between 5 and 10m from the church walls).

Correlation of Stress Markers with Cemetery Zones

Prevalence of cribra orbitalia appeared to vary greatly dependant on the position of the individual within the cemetery (Table 10.4). All individuals with the severest cribra orbitalia were buried to the south-east of the cemetery whereas mild and moderate cases were found to the north of the church (Chisquare=43.446, p=0.004). In addition, individuals buried closer to the church had less cribra orbitalia than those further from the church (Chi-square=7.215 p=0.007). However, this correlation can be explained in part by the larger number of neonates and infants closer to the church, who had a generally low prevalence of cribra orbitalia. As with cribra orbitalia, cases of tibial periostitis showed strong zoning throughout the cemetery. The majority of cases were located in the south of the cemetery with fewer cases in the north and west (Chisquare=10.592, p=0.014). Unlike cribra orbitalia, the majority of mild cases were located further from the church (Chisquare=9.637, p=0.008). Presence and severity of LEH had no statistically significant spatial patterning

within the cemetery. However the severe and moderate cases also appeared to cluster in the south-east area.

The clustering of all severe cribra orbitalia and more moderate and severe LEH cases in the south-east corner of the cemetery suggests that this region was used by those who had experienced greater biological stress, and were possibly of lower status, than those in the rest of the cemetery. The results from the analysis of tibial periostitis do not quite follow this pattern, with more cases in the south rather than the south-east of the cemetery. This result could be explained by the complex aetiology of tibial periostitis, which although commonly linked to non-specific stress can also be caused by specific infection and trauma. Indeed, the most severe cases of tibial periostitis in the cemetery – skeletons 5046 and 5256 – were the result of specific infection, not non-specific stress. 5046 had leprosy whereas 5256 had a systemic illness that could not be identified (although Faye Powell suggested the observed lesions 'may have been due to leprosy' (1996: 123) this is unlikely due to the lack of diagnostic changes to the maxilla, hands and feet combined with the presence of periosteal new bone formation on the femora, upper limbs and pelvis, which would be unusual in leprosy). Once these two cases are removed, it is apparent that cases of tibial periostitis are found more frequently within the possible low-status zone in the south-east of the cemetery. To explore the relationship between grave location and social status, spatial distribution of grave types was also considered.

	Prevalence of condition						Severity of condition					
	Cribra orbitalia		LEH		Tibial Periostitis		Cribra orbitalia		LEH		Tibial Periostitis	
	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p
Boddington's grid	22.005	*0.024*	10.416	0.493	21.731	*0.027*	43.446	*0.004*	16.311	0.800	15.576	0.743
Boddington's zones	15.954	*0.003*	11.296	*0.023*	12.744	*0.013*	12.458	0.132	7.313	0.294	9.607	0.294
Distance from church	7.215	*0.007*	0.073	0.787	1.179	0.278	1.508	0.470	0.416	0.794	9.637	*0.008*
Areas north, west, south and east of church	0.976	0.807	0.228	0.973	10.592	*0.014*	8.956	0.176	0.104	0.803	8.262	0.220

Table 10.4: Statistical correlations between stress markers and locations of graves within the cemetery.

	Boddington's grid		Boddington's zones		Distance from church		Areas north, west, south and east of church	
	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	P	Chi-square	p	Chi-square	p
Graves with stone linings or arrangements	24.819	*0.010*	1.266	0.867	0.163	0.687	3.459	0.326
Possible wooden coffins	36.226	*<0.001*	5.934	0.204	0.697	0.404	13.07	*0.004*
Graves with charcoal and/or clay linings	6.867	0.810	2.975	0.562	0.005	0.941	3.118	0.374
Graves with markers or covers	15.459	0.162	9.376	0.052	0.851	0.356	3.815	0.282
Graves with stones set under or around the head	36.218	*<0.001*	8.330	0.080	1.932	0.165	5.797	0.122

Table 10.5: Statistical correlations between different forms of elaborate grave and locations of graves within the cemetery.

Correlation of Grave Types with Cemetery Zones

The majority of possible coffin burials lay in the south, in the central areas of the cemetery

(Chi-square=13.037, p=0.004 and 36.226, p<0.001, respectively) with the fewest in the east, especially the south-eastern corner (Table 10.5). When only the most reliably identified examples of coffined burial were included in analysis – those where remains of the coffin itself had been identified – and those examples where coffined burial was assumed based on skeletal positioning were omitted, the pattern remained, in fact revealing an even stronger tendency for coffined burials to be located close to the church (Chi-square=62.035, p=0.002). The use of grave covers and markers did not produce significant correlations with spatial zones, however they appeared to be most frequent in the same area (Chi-square=9.376, p=0.052). The carved stone covers clustered close to the church (5280, 5282, 5283) with plainer stone covers common in the south-eastern sector. Grave markers were more evenly distributed, but were totally absent from the south-east zone. Stone inclusions and charcoal were distributed evenly across the graveyard, however graves including charcoal and clay appeared to occur in areas more distant from the church.

The most common stone arrangement, where small stones were placed around the head, occurred statistically most often in the far south-eastern corner of the cemetery (Chisquare=36.218, p<0.001). This area was highlighted in the site report as one of elaborate stone usage and was considered to represent a chronological increase in the use of stone (Boddington 1996, 41), however in light of the high levels of stress markers in this area, stone arrangements around the head may have been a feature of lower status graves, perhaps utilised as an alternative to more elaborate stone arrangements.

The location of two clusters of individuals within the cemetery stands out. First, the area closest to, and especially just south of, the church had many features of a higher status zone. Here, there are virtually no cases of cribra orbitalia and none of the severest cases of LEH or tibial periostitis. The majority of possible wooden coffins are located in this area, as are all of the elaborate stone coffins and all but one example of carved stone markers. In light of these correlations it can be hypothesized that this area was reserved for highstatus individuals who enjoyed better levels of health. When combined with Boddington's suggestion that this area is chronologically early, it may be that the earliest church burials were entirely reserved for the founder (possibly skeleton 5282) and those of his social class or family, a pattern suggested at other sites of this period (Richards 2000, 160; Stocker 2000, 180; Stocker and Everson 2001, 224–5). Burials closest to the church building are commonly considered to be of particular interest, their prominence within the cemetery as a whole suggesting a higher status. The most elaborate graves are also often located in this area (Buckberry 2007, 124–5).

Second, in contrast, the south-eastern corner contains all of the severest cases of cribra orbitalia and LEH. Coffins occur significantly less often and covers are plainer than in other areas. Interestingly, the high concentration of stone arrangements around the head to the south-east may suggest that this form of grave elaboration may have been more appropriate in lower status graves. The segregation of socially and physically distinct individuals on the outskirts of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries is attested at several sites (Wade-Martins 1980; Hall and Whyman 1996; Hadley 2004, and this volume). The occurrence of individuals with unusual pathologies, including the one confidently diagnosed case of leprosy (5046) and an individual with an 'end stage' osteoarthritic hip, possibly the end result of a hip dysplasia and a shortened, atrophied left arm (5062), in the south-east, adds to the suggestion that this zone was used more frequently for individuals of lower health or social status (see Hadley this volume).

Discussion

Several theories exist as to why individuals were separated in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, based on a hypothetical hierarchy of churchyard space. The north of the church is considered to have been an unpopular area for burial (Blair and McKay 1985, 43) and, as at Raunds, young children were frequently buried close to the church walls. The churchyard may conceivably have been divided into zones allocated to parts of the parish, a possibility suggested by documents that associate newer cemeteries with continued roles of responsibility to particular sectors of the old mother church cemetery (Rosser 1996, 80). Other studies have suggested that a small proportion of graves in a cemetery are often distinguished by a more unusual rite and often date to a short period of time (Buckberry 2007, 125), and distinctive high-status graves are also frequently found close together (see above).

It must be emphasized that all of the burials in this study were within the churchyard, in consecrated ground. Archaeological data suggest that true outcasts such as criminals were buried segregated from the churchyard, perhaps to enforce social, legal and religious punishment for their crimes (Reynolds 1997; 2009; Daniell 2002, 243). These so-called execution burials or cemeteries include the later Anglo-Saxon execution cemetery at Walkington Wold, Yorkshire (Buckberry and Hadley 2007; for further discussion of this kind of burial see Hadley this volume). Therefore, whilst the individuals buried in the south-eastern corner of the Raunds cemetery may be of a lower status, they cannot be described as social outcasts.

Conclusion

It is apparent from the case study presented here and from the small number of other studies of later Anglo-Saxon cemetery populations, that the investigation of social and biological status has great potential to illuminate the motivations behind burial rites. It can be demonstrated that early Christian burial was not egalitarian and that there is clear evidence for social stratification in the burial rite. This pattern is supported by the osteological record, which reveals that individuals who suffered more biological stress were often those commemorated by less elaborate burial and *visa versa*. The method suggested here is ideally suited to the late Anglo-Saxon period, as traditional approaches to social status in cemetery populations have tended to rely upon grave goods and the (now heavily criticised) assigning of degrees of wealth and rarity to them (Arnold 1980; Alcock 1981; Härke 1997), with little consideration of the part that can be played by the biological material recovered from the cemetery beyond age-at-death and biological sex. Broadening our approach to both a comparison of social and biological status and spatial analysis of the cemetery fits well with current trends towards a more integrated, bio-cultural approach to osteological and funerary research. The preliminary results of such studies provide a tantalising possibility of achieving a much deeper understanding of the burial rites and social attitudes of past communities.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Annia Cherryson, Dawn Hadley and the anonymous reviewer for comments on earlier drafts of this paper. All osteological analysis was undertaken at the Biological Anthropology Research Centre, Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, and we thank our colleagues in the BARC for their support and advice: Anthea

Boylston, Christopher Knüsel, Alan Ogden, Rebecca Storm, Marianne Schweich and Holger Schutkowski. This research was supported by the NERC and the British Academy.

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